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VISRAMIANI



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VISRAMIANT

THE STORY OF THE LOVES OF VIS
AND RAMIN

A ROMANCE OF ANCIENT PERSIA

TRANSLATED FROM THE GEORGIAN VERSION

BY

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PREFACE

THIS book is an elaborate study of a woman whose whole life was dominated by love. It is certainly one of the oldest novels in the world. Thus it will appeal to historical and linguistic students, but its intrinsic merits give it a claim to universal interest. The love-letters deserve notice as early specimens of this kind of composition, and the lyrical passages (the songs of Ramin) are also worthy of attention.

Originally written in Pahlaví, it is a relic of that literature of old Persia which was almost destroyed by Moslem zeal. The picture it gives of the life, manners, and morals of a remote age is invaluable. It is a presentment of the attitude of the time towards the most fascinating of all social relations. Of its moral tone the reader will be able to judge. The perjury, treachery, cowardice, and rougery of the chief characters are mercilessly set forth. The author sometimes shows his contempt for them; he perpetually poses as an ethical teacher; but he is evidently fond of Vis and Ramin, and will not have them blamed, for they are the slaves of relentless Fate in its most forceful form. The modern reader will probably find them less immoral than Tristan and Isolde.

The survival of the tale in Persian literature is due to a poetical version of great excellence, the text of which was published at Calcutta in 1864-65, under the title: *Vis, o, Rámín: An Ancient Persian Poem*, by Fakr al-Din, As'ad al-Astarabadi, al-Fakhri, al-Gurgani. Edited by Captain W. Nassau Lees, LL.D., and Munshi Ahmad Ali (in *Bibliotheca Indica*, New Series, No. 53). Of this poem a long account was given by K. H. Graf in vol. xxiii., *Zeitschrift d. Deutschen*

Morgenl. Gesellschaft, Leipzig, 1869 (pp. 375-433). In a short article published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, July, 1902, an effort was made to elicit from Persian scholars some opinion as to the connection between the Georgian text here translated and the modern Persian poem; the request met with no response, and subsequent endeavours to obtain information on the matter were equally unsuccessful.

Not only has the book a value as literature of high quality and as an undoubted antique, but there is reason to believe that it may have had a good deal to do with that development of European romanticism which finds utterance in the songs of the Minnesinger, the lays of the Troubadours, and the letters of Heloïsa. In N. Ethé's *Essays und Studien*, Berlin, 1872 (pp. 295-301), a comparison is drawn between *Vis and Ramin* and Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan und Isolt*. Reference may also be made to the monograph published in Moscow, in 1896, by Baron R. R. Stackelberg :

Бар. Р. Р. Штакельбергъ: Нѣсколько словъ о персидскомъ эпосѣ „Виса и Рамина“ (Moscow Archaeological Society).

The subject of the relation between medieval romance in Europe and similar literature in the East is worth more investigation than it has yet received.

The text used for this translation is—

ვისრამიანი - რედაქტორობით იღ. ჭავჭა-
ვაძის, აღ. სარაქი შვილის და პეტ. უმიკა-
შვილის. ტფილისი ექვთიმე სელაძის სტამბა
1884.

With such editors as Ilia Chavchavadze, Al. Saradjishvili, and P. Umicashvili, and with Ilia Dchqonia as proof-reader, it is no wonder that the volume is one of the best ever printed in Georgia, and singularly free from errors. With the exception of a short extract in D. Chubinov's *Chresto-*

mathy (St. Petersburg, 1863), there is no other printed Georgian text. An article on the book appeared at Tiflis in June, 1896, in the Journal ქართველი, No. 6, part ii., p. 70. It is an unfortunate circumstance that none of the MSS. used for the 1884 edition is of an earlier date than the seventeenth century. The Catholicos Antony, in the eighteenth century, no doubt destroyed all the copies he could seize, and it is a subject for congratulation and surprise that any escaped the fury of an ecclesiastic who regarded even Rust'haveli as an immoral writer.

Tradition says that *Visramiani* was translated into Georgian by Sargis T'hmogveli, in the reign of Queen T'hamara. It was certainly known to Rust'haveli, for he refers to it in quatrains 182, 1058, 1519 of *The Man in the Panther's Skin* (Oriental Translation Fund, New Series, vol. xxi., London, 1912), and several parallel passages are noted in this volume after the Index. References in the notes are marked "R." The writers of the *Odes* of that period (N. Marr's Тексты, vol. iv.; *Odes* v. 22 and 32, 1) make two allusions to Vis and Ramin. In the notes "M" indicates Prof. Marr's works.

It will be apparent to readers that the text has suffered corruption; some references to the Christian religion and some tiresome tirades have been added by scribes. In spite of the numerous Persian words and locutions, the style is singularly limpid, and full of the genius of the Georgian language.

The English translation is published chiefly with the object of aiding students of classical Georgian literature. An endeavour has been made to render the meaning of the text as closely as possible, even at the cost of lucidity and elegance. A beginner who works through the text of *Visramiani* with this translation should be fairly well equipped for the study of Rust'haveli.

The footnotes are mostly devoted to the tracing through the book of words, especially words which seem to be of foreign origin; but it would be rash to suppose that in

every case where a Georgian word is identical with a word in another language it is necessarily borrowed therefrom. The references are invariably to the pages of the original, as indicated in the margin of the translation. Arabic words are marked "A," Persian words "P."

The translator must express his gratitude to M. Michel Tseret'heli, of Heidelberg, who explained many difficult passages in the text, and to M. Th. Sakhokia, of Brussels, who has read through the proof-sheets. Their zeal to make the rendering as exact as possible has been untiring.

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VISRAMIANI

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CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY OF VIS AND RAMIN

In the land of Khuarasan and Adraba[da]gan there was a great and mighty Sultan, Tughlurbeg, lord of many hosts, powerful, glorious, sovereign of all Persia. (Only) the city of Aspaan was lacking to his kingdom.

All his nobles and great men assembled, and said: "Inasmuch as you, mighty and greatly renowned Sultan, possess your throne and kingdom in power and glory, and this is His will and choice that all Islam should be obedient to your command and should swear by your sun, now we counsel Your Majesty to do this: to assemble your armies and march against the city of Aspaan. Whoever is not obedient to your sway and seeketh not his own peace, shall he not be | straightway subdued? and henceforth if any² dare to disregard your commands, let your unrelenting wrath fall upon him, and so let your will and desire be accomplished."

The king hearkened to them, he summoned his three kingdoms. Then he divided his armies, and sent one to Kirman, one to Musul, one to Havaz; some divisions¹ he sent to Somkhiti (Armenia), some to Greece. And all, from everywhere, returned, and came victorious and triumphant.

Then came an ambassador from Arslan-Khan, in order

¹ *T'hemi* (Gr.), territorial division, clan 4; R., 477, 536.

to arrange a matrimonial alliance, and he brought countless gifts. And at the same time there came an ambassador from the king of the Greeks, and presented gifts of beautiful raiment, and among those gifts was a jewel, a red jacinth, weighing six and twenty *dramas*.¹ At Aspaan he donned the raiment sent by the king of the Greeks, and all Moslems did him homage, both foreign monarchs and his own magnates; and he was extolled by all, because of the respect, gifts, and embassies he had from all monarchs.

And this Sultan had such servants and slaves that on the face of the whole earth there was none like unto them. Among them was a renowned, generous, wise-minded man, complete in manhood, fearless, prudent, cheerful, faultless in speech, brave, and a seeker after wisdom, perfect in all virtues, exquisite;² he was right cunning in leechcraft; a lover of all men, | a man of God, and he was lord of a great land. Besides all these virtues, he was a seeker after strange stories and poetry.

When the Sultan had taken the city of Aspaan, he left his army and departed, leaving Ibdal-Melik vizier in Aspaan. While the latter was on a journey, he saw a Jorjaneli (man of Jorjan), and the man pleased him, and began to tell stories of what he had seen. One night he was by his side, and in drinking (Ibdal) inquired: "Know'st thou not the story of Vis and Ramin? I greatly wish to hear their story, and for a long time I have sought it. I have heard of their virtues."

P'hakhp'hur³ replied: "I know it all, and I have heard of their virtues and their royal character, for thou hast mentioned a good, pleasant story, told by wise men, and composed in the P'halauri (Pehlevi) tongue; but since nobody knows P'halauri⁴ very well, no one can translate it. Now, if thou commandest me, I will reveal their story and translate it into Persian."

¹ *Drama*, 58.

² *Natip'hi*, R., 1104, 1312.

³ Fakhr (cf. Graf, "Wis o Ramin"). Faefur in Persian = son of heaven, and is used as synonym for Emperor of China.

⁴ Pehlevi, 128.

Ibdal-Melik-Abunasar thanked him for this, and gave him hope of reward. Then P'hakhp'hur spoke thus: "Since it is so, and their story is naturally liked, and it is desired that I should tell it, I will narrate it in choice language¹ and translate it. Since their name is great on the earth, let my name, too, remain by this means in the world."

¹ ? "in rhythmic (ordered or metrical) speech."

THE STORY OF VIS AND OF RAMIN, AND HIS ELDEST BROTHER
SHAH MOABAD

THERE was (once) a great and mighty king of Adraban, and sovereign of all the tribes¹ and lands, lord of great treasures. He held Khuarasan, T'hurkistan, Eraq, Adra-ba[da]gan, Koistan, Khuarazm; he was lord of continents and seas, and glorious over all Persia. Many kings he had (under him) happy and secure, and in those days there was no man disobedient to his word. The king himself was a fire-worshipper,² and all the kingdom. This king was before the coming of Christ, and his name was Shah Moabad.³ He had a brother called by the name of Zard, and he was Shah Moabad's vizier.

As is the custom with the Persians, they made a great council and celebrated the New Year (Navroz) with such magnificence that it cannot be conceived by the mind of man. Let us tell something of the pomp of their Bairam-Navroz celebration. On that day came the kings who were his vassals, and the magnates with their wives and children, to rejoice and to do service: men of Shiraz, Aspaan, Eraq, 5 Jorjan, Gelan, Ardavel, and Bardavel; | Shahp'hur of Gelan, and Zard himself, brother and vizier of Shah Moabad, and the nobles of the whole land, with their womenfolk, went to Shah Moabad to Khuarasan, to the city of Marav (Merv). They came forth, and each ordered his footmen⁴ to set up

¹ *T'hemi*, 2.

² Servant of the fire.

³ In the manuscripts variously spelt: Moabad, Movabad, Muabad, Muvabad, Mobad.

⁴ *P'hareshi*.

tents and apartments in the field: "Adorn the plains," said they. All this bravery¹ excelled the power of imagination. They came to the plain, they brought in wall-carpets, the footmen and other servants adorned the gardens, and filled them with household goods and treasures. They wearied the elephants and camels bearing loads of treasures. Whatever was befitting to his worth,² that they made ready.

He called his kings and nobles: whoever was worthy to sit down, they seated; and as for the others who were there, they stood, each fulfilling his office. They invited the queens (and dames)³ to sit down honourably, they led in many kinds of skilful maiden minstrels; one by one they sang, the lovers of the rose (*i.e.*, nightingales) warbled on the rose, and they kept in tune with the women minstrels. The wives of the monarchs and the dames, fair as sun and moon, sat. Two fair ruby tints had the ladies: one of the face and the other of the wine. They censed aloes, musk, and amber, and the fragrance thereof made smoke as great as a cloud, and its hue was like the hair of the dames. Their wealth and fortune, treasure and riches, were heavier than a mountain, and the sorrow among them was lighter than straw. And the women of the whole land came to gaze at their bride. | There were still fairer ones⁶ than the new bride; and in gaining them much blood will be spilt.⁴ There was Sharo Mahdukht of Adraba[d]gan; Manosh of Asp'hburgan; Naslakit'h of Dehistan;⁵ Dinirges and Zarniges⁶ (maids) from the root of the mountain; Shirin and Gurges of Aspaan, two sunlike beauties; Abanozn, Abanoed,⁷ two pretty damsels, daughters of

¹ *Sicet he*, 126.

² Ch. (Notes thus marked refer to the extract of Visramiani printed in D. Chubinov's *Chrestomathy*, S. Pbg., 1863.)

³ Ch. omits "and dames."

⁴ Ch. omits "in gaining them . . . be spilt."

⁵ 26.

⁶ Zarniges, *cf.* Zarnages, 198.

⁷ Ch., "Although to look at the brides they were even fairer than new brides: Shakhroma Dukht of Adrbagan; the slave (Mona) Shasaph

scribes ; the wife¹ and Shakarlab, the daughter of Isaman the vizier ; and Abanosh of Eraq ;² the tender Adragun (*i.e.*, Asphodel) and Gulguno ; Shainam and Khaibla (? Zaibla or Saibla) of Shiraz, and Shah Moabad's wives ; there were Chinese,³ T'hurkis, Barbarians, Greeks, noblemen's daughters, and the Khuarazmi was the lady of these queens.⁴ Each was more beautiful than the other. No one can fittingly tell forth their praise, in face and form⁵ they were perfect and faultless in all points. All were seated before King Moabad.

The monarch, Shah Moabad, was a lover of women ; he gazed, he rejoiced, he gave gifts, and bade the minstrels sing ; some he made to joust in the lists, some to sport with lances, and the lovely damsels to sway to and fro in the round dance.

For a week they made merry with great rejoicing. He gave away all the jewels, pearls, and treasures which had been used in their drinking and rejoicing⁶ at the feast. He satisfied great and small, none there was passed over. Thereupon Shahro, the elder-born,⁷ with smiling face jested⁸ with Shah Moabad. When Shah Moabad heard the words of Shahro⁹ he spoke thus :

“ Ah rose, thou that smiling speakest ! May I ever see
7 thee merry ! | Since in the days of thine old age thou art
such a ravisher of hearts, what must thou have been in the

of Gurgan, Naslakith of Descitan, and Nirges and Zarniges from the roots of the mountains, Shirin and Gurgis of Ispan, two sunlike ebon beauties, Abanoed-Abano. For Abanoz and Shirin, 130.

¹ Or household—*jalab*.

² Ch., Jalab and Isaman (the vizier's daughter), Shakarlab and Abanom of Eraq.

³ Ch., Gulgulon of Shiraz, Shainam and Sibala, and Shah Moabad's wives were Chinese.

⁴ Ch. omits “ and the Khuarazmi . . . queens.” The whole paragraph seems to be very corrupt.

⁵ Ch., “ in face, eye, and form.”

⁶ Ch. omits “ rejoicing.”

⁷ Is *pirmsho* a corrupt reading for *pirmze* = sunfaced ?

⁸ Made a *zma*—*i.e.*, a play upon words. R., 1495.

⁹ Ch., Sharo.

time of thy youth ! Since thou art thus when thou art a half-faded rose, how could those who erstwhile saw thee live or have reason ! Now that my heart is darkened and I am without hope, do not, I pray, cut me off from thy race; wed me to thy daughter, for the fruit is like the seed, and thy daughter is like thee. My fate and future will then be more blessed when of thy race a sun like thee shall shine in my palace. And if I find a sun on earth I shall not seek a heavenly sun.”¹

Thus in reply spoke Shahro the fair: “O most sovereign of sovereigns ! Nothing better could befall us than to have thee for son-in-law if God had been merciful and I had a daughter; but, by thy sun, I have no daughter, else if I had I would have told thee. Hitherto no girl-child has been born to me, and if now one shall be given to me, without fail I shall tell you ” (var., “I shall give her to you as wife ”).

Then Shah Moabad adjured her: “Swear unto me that if a daughter be given thee she shall wed none save me.”

The wife of Qaran, the mother of Viro,² made a solemn vow with an oath: “If a daughter be given me I shall wed her to thee, and she is thy wife.”

Shahro’s husband was Qaran.³ | But Shahro was of nobler⁸ birth than Qaran; she was of the offspring of king Djimshed, who was the fifth king after Adam.

They mixed musk and rose-water and therewith they wrote down the oath, and they made a contract with each other: “If a daughter be given to Shahro, Shah Moabad’s wife shall she be.”

Behold what sorrow they both were to see: He was wedding the unborn, and the mother was betrothing the unborn.

¹ R., 202.

² Ch. omits “the mother of Viro.”

³ Ch. omits “Shahro’s husband was Qaran.”

CHAPTER III¹

MORAL²—THE DECREE OF GOD AND ITS APPLICATION

INNUMERABLE are the deeds and treacheries of Fate. Fate ties knots in such a way that the wit and wisdom of a thousand cannot undo them. Shah Moabad was so amorous that he would wed the unborn.

APPLICATION³: Experience revealed this secret from its bosom, that from greatness her misfortune should be born.⁴

When both had ratified the writing of the oath and confirmed their matrimonial alliance, Fate began, after her wont, to sew with quick stitch, to add wonder upon wonder.

After their contract many years passed, and all men had forgotten it ; their story was become ancient, | none remembered their deed any longer. Then Shah Moabad heard that the thirty-year-old Shahro was pregnant with that precious pearl. When nine months had passed, there came forth from her a glittering moon. 'Twas not a womb, but the Orient, and thence rose a glorious sun. Such a daughter Shahro bore that at her birth the dark night was made light. They celebrated the birth, and they called the

¹ Ch. does not begin a new chapter, but continues : "Here is the decree of God upon them and the innumerable treacheries of Fate, how it ties knots in such a way that if one had a thousand wits and intelligences they could not undo them."

² Hakimat'hi (*cf.* Koran), 21.

³ Shegoneba, 16.

⁴ "Foreknowledge kept this secret from his heart" (*i.e.*, did not reveal, supplying particle *ar*) ; "that from the mother" (*i.e.*, Shahro, reading *dedisagan*) "his misfortune should be born." Text obscure.

name of the bright one¹ Vis. She was straightway entrusted to a nurse of good birth, to be reared.

The monarch Moabad had a brother called Ramin, who was born at the same time as Vis. King Moabad loved him as a son, and looked upon him as his successor. He sent him to be brought up in Khuzistan, because of the goodness of that climate and country. Vis and he were nurtured in one land: as in one garden two flowers—aspodel and eglantine.²

Who knew how far their deeds would reach? What is this, or what does time lay aside for them? Whoever hearkens to this story will learn the shame, inconstancy, and treachery of this world,³ which for no one perfects either grief or joy. Its sorrow and gladness alike are momentary. It is like a little child; he laughs at something and he gives us something; he cries, and what he gave even into our hands he asks of us again. Vis and Ramin should not be blamed, because, by the decree of God, they are not controlled by wisdom.⁴

So Ramin grew up, and when he had reached man's estate they said of him: "There is none on the face of the earth like unto Ramin." I shall tell you his praise⁵ | so 10 that I, cunning in mind and eloquent in tongue, without fault may make evident a little. His form was peerlessly beautiful and harmonious in every part. In his face he was like the sun; he was dark-eyed and dark-eyebrowed; had rich and curly hair, a black beard like a swallow's tail; in form well-proportioned, never has painter limned one like him; in strength and courage like a lion, in fierceness fiercer than the panther; a horseman, huntsman, skirmisher, a lively chess-player; he was peerlessly skilled

¹ *Mnat'hobi*—heavenly light, lustrous, 9, 75.

² *Adraguni da nasrani*. Graf translates the Persian "anemone and narcissus."

³ Ch.; or, "Who has heard of what time had in store? Know this story and the fickleness, shames, and treachery of the world."

⁴ The text is obscure. Perhaps it should read: ". . . because the decree of God cannot be controlled (bound?) by wisdom" (?).

⁵ Ch., "Listen to his praise."

in all pleasant melodies for stringed instruments ; none could draw his bow, none could play like him with lance and in tourney, so that 'twas a pleasure to behold him;¹ compared with him, singers and drinkers were nought ; beyond all this, he had, as you would say, the brightness of the whole world within himself. No man in those times could be found to combat with him. So many folk came to see him that field and market-place could not contain them, and all with uplifted hand entreated from God a long life for him. When Moabad heard that Ramin had grown up after this fashion, he rejoiced accordingly : he gave thanks to God and great alms to the poor. He sent distinguished nobles to Khuzistan, and they brought away Shah Moabad's brother Ramin and came into his presence at Marav.

¹ ? Or, "it was an aim to behold him"; "there was a striving to behold him."

THE LETTER WRITTEN BY THE NURSE OF VIS TO SHAHRO,
THE MOTHER OF VIS

SHE wrote thus: "I marvel that thou seest not her who was born of thy womb and was given to me to rear, neither dost thou inquire after her nor give me any orders: thou neither rememberest her nurse nor turnest towards thy beloved child, nor dost thou take pride in her peerless face. How canst thou be so stony-hearted as to forget her? Since thou barest and gavest her to me, to her thou hast not behaved suitably nor worthily. Now she has grown up with much self-will, and like a falcon's fledgling begins to soar upward. I fear that her flight will be so high that this nest will no longer content her and she will go away somewhere to seek her peers. Peerlessness and solitude go ill together.

"I have nurtured her most delicately, and now she is no longer pleased with our raiment, nor our meat and drink, although by God's help we lack nought. Our power prevails not against her self-will; however matchless the robes I sew for her, she casts shame on sixty colours. If I give her yellow, she says this is garb for the sick; if I give her red, she says that is for harlots; blue¹ is the colour of mourners; white, quoth she, is for monks'² gowns, and two-coloured for scribes. When | she wakes in the morning she 12 commands her slaves and handmaidens and demands silk³ attire; at midday she demands a dress of gold brocade, and in the evening a dress of cloth of gold;⁴ every moment

¹ Mourning colours, 186.

² *Beri*, old man. Cf. R., 1194 note.

³ *Hariri*, 178.

⁴ *Oksino*, 118; R., 820.

she demands another kind. . . .¹ At meal-times, in season and out of season, she asks of me golden dishes and trays ; (she demands) fifty fair handmaidens and fifty slaves to serve her, all clad with golden girdles and satin and cloth of gold ; at a feast she desires eighty fair, well-born maidens, and says : ' I will not have less.'

"I can no longer endure her self-will and I can by no means give her what she asks of me. Who am I that I should bring up a king's daughter as she wishes to be brought up ? Now when thou readest this letter take speedy counsel and carry away thy daughter, the beautifier of the earth.

"PARABLE (*Araci*)²: Ten fingers are not of so much use as one head, nor from a thousand stars comes the light of one sun."

She gave the letter to a swift messenger³ and sent it to Shahro. When the nurse's letter came to Vis's mother and she heard the praise of her daughter, and how she was grown up, she gave the scribe a coronet⁴ of gold and many other great possessions, and so enriched him that the wealth would suffice from generation to generation. Then Shahro sent to her daughter to Marav, with pomp, as is the custom with sovereigns, a golden litter adorned with jewels and pearls, many *Khodjas*,⁵ handmaidens and servants. Such 13 treasures and gold she sent to the nurse | that the camels and mules were grievously burdened with the stuff. And from the land of Khuzistan lovingly and leisurely they led her to the city of Hamian.⁶

¹ The text here reads : *da at'hassa vmanavsa tarsa*, which is unintelligible.

² *Araci*, fable 16. Cf. *enxemplo* in the Spanish *Conde Lucanor*.

³ *P'haranda*, 143 ; according to Ch., "crane."

T'hadji.

⁵ *Khodjani*, 47, 438—teachers, secretaries ; in the lexicon appended to the text "eunuchs" (?) .

⁶ *Amian*, 14, 130, 140.

CHAPTER V

IN WHICH THEY BRING VIS FROM KHUZISTAN INTO THE CITY OF HAMIAN

WHEN they brought her in, and Shahro saw her, she delighted even more in the beloved face and form of her daughter than in any son. With upraised hand she gave thanks to God, and in His name blessed her, and breathed upon her face so that the evil eye might not harm her. Then she gave to the poor untold gold and possessions and set her before her on a throne. Shahro gazed; between her (Vis) and the sun there was a strife as to which was which, and, as is the wont of an affectionate parent, she began to adorn her thus: She anointed her with musk and amber and many kinds of scents, and clad her in gold brocaded robes, she perfumed her with the smoke of aloes and musk, and dressed her up like a Manechineli form;¹ so unblemished, perfect, and pretty she was that whoever looked at her was delighted, and when they began to adorn her with gold and pearls they said how beautiful she was, and Vis's colour reflected in the gold gave it a ruddier hue.

| When the mother saw her daughter thus superabundantly beautiful, she said:

“O beautifier of all the world, thy sovereign Khuasrov² (var., sovereign father), and thy sovereign queen mother are noble, thou art equally peerless, and I know not upon the earth a husband fit for thee; and since upon the

¹ *Sakhe*, 207; *manechineli*. Cf. *chinuri*, 26, 62, 75. ? “A Chinese doll,” or “porcelain doll.”

² ? *Qaran*.

earth no one is an equal match for thee, it may not be that I should bestow thee upon one unworthy of me. In no land is thy peer and equal, save my son Viro. Wed him and multiply our seed, and in this matrimonial alliance I shall rejoice. Be Viro's wife, praiseworthy sister of him, be my daughter-in-law, my beautiful daughter. Then will my life be complete to me, and pleasant, when I unite you according to my heart's desire and commit you to each other's hands."

When Vis heard this discourse she reddened from great shame, and in her heart a fire was kindled for love of her brother, and she could not answer Yea or Nay. The other women perceived it and said to Vis's mother Shahro that silence in a girl is a sign of desire. Her mother also said that she was an old experienced woman, and in her youth the same thing had happened at the time of her wedding her husband.

When she was convinced by the girl of her desire for Viro, at that very moment she called all the astrologers¹ and wise men who were under her sway and command from Amian, Gorab, and everywhere to tell of their constellation and fate, what would happen, or how her daughter and her son Viro would rejoice in their wedding. The astrologers chose a good day and all assembled in session. They sought and took counsel, they saw the fate and constellation of her daughter Vis and of her son Viro. They appointed a happy day, and under their constellation and at a lucky time Shahro went and called her son Viro and her daughter Vis into her throne-room.² A kiosk³ was erected, and in it the three seated themselves: the mother mother-in-law, the son son-in-law, the daughter daughter-in-law. The mother mother-in-law took Vis's hand and put it in the hand of her brother Viro and committed her to him, as was their custom, she blessed her and gave her to him to wife, and spoke thus:

" You are neither unacquainted nor strangers one to the other. There is no need to adorn the bride, God Himself

¹ *Munedjimni.*

² *Darbaz.*

³ *Coshci*, 49, 120, 128.

has adorned her; neither should there be any dowry. You two are one, you need no witness nor mediator, as your witness God and His angels are enough."

She alone committed them to one another, blessed them, and said :

"God the Creator cause you to rejoice in each other, and may He show me and give me to bring up as many of your children as I wish."

HERE IS THE WEDDING OF VIS AND HER BROTHER VIRO AND
THE COMING OF MOABAD'S BROTHER ZARD AS ENVOY

WHEN a tree is not planted straight, forthwith its crookedness appears.

When a deed is bad in the end, it can also be seen to be so at the beginning.

PARABLE (*Araci*)¹: When there is a bad year of drought, it will be known and seen in the winter (before).

ILLUSTRATION (*Shegoneba*)²: When an arrow goes not straight, it is seen in the drawing of the bow.

When little fruit is borne on a tree, it will be revealed by its blossom in the spring.

So Vis's fate appeared that very day bitterness and unhappiness; for when their mother Shahro placed their hands one in the other and began to prepare for the wedding, having gathered the magnates and warriors from all the land, and when they would have feasted, and drunken and made merry, suddenly at that very moment a black cloud came forth from the sea. It was a bright day, sunny, pleasant, and forthwith, one might say, night fell, so much was the earth darkened, and a great wind arose, and there was a great dust, so that they could not see one another. The wedding guests broke up and separated.

At that moment there came along the road a man accou-
17 tred in black, | seated on a black horse, his saddle and armour were black, and his name was Zard (yellow), and he brought a palanquin adorned with violet colour and a

¹ *Araci*, 12, 23.

² *Shegoneba*, 8.

letter from Shah Moabad. Although he was envoy, yet he was the brother and vizier of Moabad. He stopped before Viro, and from horseback gave Shahro a letter, sealed with a golden seal. The envoy craved pardon that he alighted not from his horse, and spoke thus :

“ Such commandment have I from Shah Moabad. Day and night have I gone on, sleeping not, wearing out many horses by my haste ; the rest you will learn from the letter.”

When she raised the seal and opened the letter—though pleasant words were written (therein)—Shahro was like a loaded ass in the mire. Her road was blocked by shame and sorrow, for she recognized in Moabad’s letter the oath written by her, and so great an oath that the first thing written in it was the name of God, the doer of justice, who always does right and commands men to do right ; heaven and earth He created in righteousness, not so much as a hair’s breadth of crookedness will He permit us. As He adorned the earth with righteousness, even so He asked men to do and speak truth. Whoever seeks to increase righteousness, victory will always go before him. There is nothing like righteousness on the earth, for the increase of righteousness has no decrease.

“ Shahro ! I seek justice from thee, for thou shouldst always do justice and seek truth. We two swore | a love 18 promise and matrimonial alliance. God and His angels stood to us as mediator, and we wrote a written oath. Now, why hast thou forgotten God, and broken thy promise to me ; thy daughter was then wedded to me, her whom thou barest in thy thirtieth year. God Himself gave thee thy daughter fated for me, else thou hadst never before a daughter. Now I rejoice greatly that thou hast borne a daughter. I have given great possessions to the poor because God has had mercy on thee, and has fulfilled my hope which by His grace thou hadst.

“ Now, since God has granted me this moon, if she be mine, I wish her to be no longer yonder, because in your land old men and youths are all lovers of women ; they sacrifice self and soul for them. The men of your country

are always deceivers of women, and pursue after them ; it seems to them a fine deed to do this. May God not allow any woman to see her (Vis's) face, that she may not learn their evil customs. Women are tender-hearted and soft-hearted ; as one is brought up and becomes accustomed so will the habit be formed. Women are trained to be true-hearted, they believe the discourse of men, and yield themselves up to pleasant words. However careful and wise a woman may be, she will be subjected¹ by the tongue of a pleasant man. Women's mischance is this : That when a man says : 'I find thee so lovely and pretty : I shall die for love and affection, day and night I weep, with sorrow-
19 stricken face,² like a madman, | and foes sail out upon me from the thought of thee.³ If thou have not pity on me I shall die, and in the life to come I shall lay hold of the skirt of thy garment. Why dost thou not have pity, I am a young man and a child of Adam like thee.' Hereupon, however God-fearing and honourable a woman may be, these words will seduce her, and she will not understand that afterwards she will be put to shame. Now, however worthy, pure, and honourable she may be, I am timorous in this matter. Keep her not there, but send her to me to Marav without delay, and joyfully.

"Take no thought about dowry, gold, precious stones, and pearls, for I want her not for the dowry. I shall treat her without shame and bring her up, and I shall entrust to her hands the key of all my treasure, and send thee so much jewels, gold, and pearls, that if thou wilt thou mayest build a town of gold with walls of precious stones. Thee thyself I shall verily treat honourably, and your land, as a patrimony for your glory, I shall set free and grant it to you by charter⁴ (*i.e.*, freed from allegiance). I shall treat Viro like a brother, and give him a wife of my race, and so ally myself with him that your name will be remembered for ever."

When Shahro read this and learnt that he sought his wife, she trembled and became giddy, she bent her head and

¹ *Dzabuni*, 169.

³ ? read *tzurven* for *vitzurav*.

² *Daghredjili*, 109.

⁴ *Dagitser*.

no longer looked up for shame, and her neck was twisted like a wounded snake ; she feared God and likewise Moabad, and in her heart said thus : " What have I done ? First, I have abandoned God | and broken my oath ; and, secondly, 20 I have deprived so great a monarch of his wife and wedded her. Every man who breaks his oath shall thus be put to shame and tongue-tied as I now am, sorrow-stricken and senseless."

When Vis looked round and saw her mother trembling and yellow, she was wrathful at her mother, and spoke thus : " What is this that has befallen thee that thy colour has faded and thou hast no longer any heart ? How did God take away thy reason to such an extent that thou didst go and betroth an unborn daughter ? What thou hast done would not please a man of sense. Every man must laugh at thee." Then she said to the envoy Zard, the brother and vizier of Shah Moabad : " Whence dost thou come ? What is thy name and kin ? "

Zard replied thus :

" I am of the race of Shah Moabad. Before him I am honourable, and wherever he goes I am the leader of his armies. They call me Zard."

When Vis heard his reply, her heart became fierce, and she said :

" May he also be yellow¹ by whom thou art sent, such a wonder and rarity. These your manners are disgusting and insulting that you would wed a wedded wife. Art thou blind that thou dost not see the banquet² and carousing for the wedding, how the minstrels sing and the voice reaches heaven, and the magnates, | nobles and warriors of 21 all the land are here assembled ; how the palace is adorned and all men bless us ? Happy is this marriage, for the bride is daughter and the bridegroom is son. Now, since thou hast seen our wedding, and heard the voice of the minstrels, and hearkened to the praise of the bride and bridegroom by the minstrels, why dost thou not depart ? Now, whence thou hast come thither return, and come not again with any hope of me, for the hand of thy hope of leading me away is

¹ ? Synonym of dead ; corpse-coloured.

² Maeman.

very short. Affright not us with letters and threats ; your threats, letters, and the wind seem all one to us. Now, why dost thou stand here ? Thus it is : my brother and husband, Viro, is now coming from the chase, he will see thee and be displeased with me, and he will be an enemy to you. Go away quickly, so that there be no quarrel nor enmity. But tell this to Moabad from me : None should take heed like thee, thy brain has gone from thee through old age, and thy day of survival is fulfilled. Rotten old man ! if thou hadst all knowledge it befits thee not in the time of thine old age that thou, a spent old man, shouldst dispute with a young man for his wife. If thou art a man, thou shouldst make preparation for the journey to eternity in thine old age, not for a young man's wife. My husband Viro is a newly-matured lion, and Shahro is my mother. As long as I am here with him it will be long ere I think of Marav and Moabad. While Viro is lying by my side, as my lord and master, it will be long ere I yearn for Moabad and Marav.

“ *Hukumat'hi*¹ : As long as I have a fruitful cedar I seek no noisome, rotten, and withered elder-tree. It is his heart that would be my stay in solitude whose affairs are well managed at home (and who) is happy (?). I love my Viro 22 as my life, and I can no more part from my | Shahro than from mine eye. I will obey them, like sugar I will be sweet with them. I do not want the senile Moabad in solitude.”

When Zard heard this discourse of Vis, at the same moment he turned his face towards Marav and struck his horse with his whip. So swiftly he went that the wind could not overtake the dust he made. Day and night he went. And Moabad awaited him, and thought thus in himself : “ Where can my Zard be now ? What can he be doing ? ” He had his eye and his ear on the road by which Zard should come. Suddenly dust appeared, Zard came forth from the dust. Excited and tired, he was almost mad, so that in his wrath he could not distinguish good from bad. At the same moment Moabad came and met Zard. He said thus :

¹ Arabic, 8, 23.

“O Zard, art thou a lion or a fox?”

Zard dismounted from his horse, did homage and kissed the ground before him; thus he spoke: “God give thee many years, be happy from God and from fate, and may your enemies be by thy sword slain and enslaved. And always in their land be dearth and hail. May their wind be a plague and their moon evil, and their sun death and their cloud rainless and their earth fruitless. I went and I saw their land adorned and beautified like Paradise, and the magnates of the whole land, lion-like heroes,¹ and their wives like the sun and moon; and the palace was adorned with their loveliness like the sky with stars, and Vis sat in their midst a queen, like the full moon in the midst of the stars. There was a wedding and rejoicing, so that in their land not one man | was sorrowful, all were 23 merry and smiling. The minstrels² sang, and the singers,³ aloud with pleasant voice, and their wedding, by your good sun, seemed to me as mourning, and their singing as weeping and lamentation. Of being son-in-law to her, the fame and desire alone remain to thee. And at Vis’s side sits someone else and rejoices in her. You have dug a canal,⁴ you saw (i.e., had) the trouble; but others drink the water. *Araci*⁵: To the ignorant, great and small appear equal, like as to a blind eye day and night are all one. They have done this inconsiderate deed having no fear of you. But as long as you do no harm to them, and do not requite them, we are in shame and dishonour. Chief and greatest in stupidity and haughtiness among them is Viro. He thinks that he created the little mountains, and there they call him Shah, and they call the Shah king. Some of the people there do not even know you, and think that Viro is lord of the whole earth, and that there is no other monarch save him. Some insult you by calling you ‘rotten,’ some speak of you as ‘Moabad who *was*.’ ”⁶

When Zard told this story to Shah Moabad the face of

¹ *Dchabuci*, 71.

² *Mutribl’ha*, 105.

³ *Mgosant’ha*.

⁴ *Ru*, 170.

⁵ 12, 16.

⁶ ? Or simply “*Moabad*” (without royal title).

the king became yellow and he was wroth. His coral-like face became saffron-coloured with anger and affliction; he quivered with enmity and rage like a willow in the wind and like a sunbeam in water. He said to his brother :

“ Didst thou see with thine eyes what thou hast told me, or hast thou heard it with thine ears from others ? Tell me what thou hast seen, and not what thou hast heard.

24 *Hukumat'hi*¹: The tidings are not like truth, | nor is it conceivable that it has been seen.

“ Tell me nothing thou hast heard, but relate to me what thou didst plainly see.”

His brother replied thus :

“ Exalted² monarch ! I am not one of those who tell what they have not seen, and speak superfluity. With mine eyes have I seen what I have told thee, and much of what I heard with my ears have I hidden. Hitherto Shahro has seemed to me as my mother and Viro also as my brother. Now I have no eyes to behold them, for I am their foe for your sake. My head and body need no soul, if love and service to you be lacking in my heart. If thou commandest and desirest, I will swear to thee by God and your sun that I saw the wedding with mine eyes ; but there have I neither eaten nor drunken because their then-time drinking, merrymaking, and singing seemed to me war against me ; and their palace decked like Paradise (by your sun and goodness!) seemed to me a dark dungeon ; the voice of the minstrels sounded to me in wrath like an insult.³ What I have seen that have I told you, and as you command and counsel, we are slaves and earth, hearkeners and followers of your command.”

When Shah Moabad was a second time assured of the truth of this story, load upon load of grief was heaped on his back. Sometimes he twisted like a serpent with a bruised head, and sometimes his heart bubbled like a jar 25 full of sweet (new) wine. | The magnates who were before

¹ 8, 21.

² *Maghalo*, 122 ; *maghlisa*, R., 32, 1198, 1240.

³ Or perhaps, “like an insult in wrath.”

him all gnashed their teeth in sorrow, and said : " How did Shahro dare to unite the wife of so great a monarch to another man? or how did Viro dare to wed her ? " The magnates whispered to one another.

There was a conversation among the soldiers : " Henceforth the house of Shahro, Qaran, and Viro is laid waste, henceforth the sun and moon no longer lighten their land. Now will Shahro so hate Viro that he will seem as one with whom she hath a blood feud, no longer as a son. The eye (? fate) of the house and abode of Qaran and Shahro is fallen (? gone)."

The magnates of Moabad had¹ a secret (colloquy),² and they said : " Not only their house and dwelling shall be laid waste, but many other women shall be widowed ! Shah Moabad's anger will burn them up so that their dust and ashes no longer remain ! Such a cloud will rest upon their land that the rain which flows from it shall be death ! The preacher³ has cried by the decree of God on them that Vaaman's possessions are Vaaman's.⁴ A rain of misfortune shall come upon their land ! Blessed is he who is not near them ! Much blood boils in their members, and the hearts of many are beating hard."

In this manner spoke Moabad's magnates and warriors one to another. Moabad's heart burned with the fire of thought, and he could not stand still in one place. And he called at that instant scribes, and from his heart he threw up words like gall. And he wrote everywhere to all the monarchs and magnates a letter, | and complained of 26 Shahro—how Shahro had outraged religion and broken her oath.

And those who were sent went everywhere swifter than the wind. " Let us assemble, let us fit out against them a campaign from Tabristan, Jorjan, Deistan,⁵ Khuarazm,⁶

¹ *Itkondage*. For *qe cf.* Rusthavelli, 76, 510, and Hugo Schuchardt's "Georgische *qe*." Schuchardt says it is a plural sign.

² *Khuashiadi*, 97.

³ *Muneticiman*—Arabic : speaker, crier.

⁴ ?

⁵ 6.

⁶ R., 389, 495, 497, 1543.

Khuarasan,¹ Koistan, Sin,² Hindoet'hi, T'hobit'h,³ Chin,² Machin,² Sughd,⁴ and T'huran."⁵ Upon this so many soldiers were in the field at Marav that it seemed like the day of the last judgment by reason of the number and pomp of the men.

¹ 1.

² 62, Chinuri, Chineli; 151, Chinethi.

³ T'humbut'huri, 223.

⁴ Sogdiana.

CHAPTER VII

HERE SHAH MOABAD SETS FORTH TO FIGHT VIRO

At that time when Viro learnt the tidings of Shah Moabad, how he was become an enemy to him and to Shahro also, and had collected from every land magnates and soldiers, there had come also many noted nobles to the wedding of Vis, from Adraba[da]gan, Ra,¹ Gelan, Khuzistan, Astabakhar (var., Astabar or Astarabasran), Aspa[a]n. All these magnates, the lords of these lands, were with Viro | as guests, 27 and their wives were with Shahro. They were making merry and drinking.

When they heard the tidings of Moabad and learnt of his assembling of troops, all the magnates sent letters, and each summoned his army. Viro gathered such another army that field and plain could not contain them. From all lands heroes came on foot; such a number of Delami and Arab horsemen assembled that they were more numerous than the sand; from every land old men, experienced and wise warriors, came. The troops were set in order. Viro reviewed the hosts that came before him.

From there also Shah Moabad arrayed the soldiers and set out from Marav. When his armies began to march, the earth began to shake beneath them by reason of their weight and number; their dust rose so high that it seemed as if the moon and the dust were holding privy converse; his assembled soldiers in the dust looked like stars through a thick cloud; such a flood went from Khuarasan that the sun and moon hid themselves in heaven for fear of them.

¹ ? Ran.

With such fury came the soldiers of Moabad that mountain was to them as plain and plain as mountain. Thus came the soldiers eager, and the king indignant. The two armies came face to face, and the brave heroes were agitated as the sea by a great and mighty wind.

HERE IS THE GREAT BATTLE BETWEEN MOABAD AND VIRO

WHEN from the east came forth the sun, whose vizier is the moon, and whose throne is the morning, both hosts formed early in battle array,¹ and both monarchs began to deploy their two armies for battle and display. On both sides began the beating of the copper drums,² the blare of the trumpets, the voice of the clarion;³ it was, you might say, the noise of devils, for whoever heard that din every one at the sound became a foeman to another. It was such a clatter that old corpses which had crumbled to earth would have trembled in the ground for fear of them.

They hurled themselves one upon another, and the shock of them was like autumn winds that cast down the leaves from the trees. Two armed men by the clash of such an encounter were cut down, and from both sides copper drum and trumpet shrieked thereat: "Haste ye, O ye ravishers of life!" The trumpet evidently knew of their death, it thus wept for them even beforehand. The keen swords in the hands of the warriors smiled like lightning on their souls. The heroes in the plain were like lions, and in the mountains⁴ like fierce panthers, and even those who were experienced in battle became furious. | Of a truth they²⁹ were mad and full of hate, so that they feared neither fire nor water, neither sword, lance, scourge,⁵ nor arrow, neither lions nor elephants. In that battle there were heroes such that they sacrificed their sweet souls for glory

¹ *Razmi*—squadron, detachment. R., 801, etc.

² *Kosi*, 30, 47. R., 703, 1436, 1556. ³ *Qvirostviri*.

⁴ Ch. omits "in the mountains." ⁵ *Lakhti*, 145. R., 1087.

and feared not death. They only feared shame and flight. The air was like a forest with the multitude of lances and standards, the earth was like a cedar grove with the many kinds of flags.¹ On one the lion sits, on another a peacock, on another a vulture,² on another an eagle.³ The earth was suddenly become dust,⁴ it rose to heaven and poured down upon the heads of the warriors. Many youths became like old men, and black horses grew white.⁵ Cowards and brave men were recognized by this, that the cowards were sad and the brave were gay. The face of the brave was like the flower of a pomegranate ; of the cowardly, like a scorpion with yellowness.

The two armies met like two mountains of steel falling together. Between them, like messengers, the arrows of poplar with eagles'² plumes came and went steely faced ; such beloved messengers were they that they penetrated even to the heart and to the eyes, no other place would please them ; and into whatever abode such a messenger came, he carried off with him the master and host. The battle became so keen that they saw eternity clearly revealed. Brother became careless of brother, and in that hour none had helper or succourer save his own right arm.

30 | Whoever had a powerful arm, used his sword as it seemed good to him. The warriors seemed tongueless amid the wind⁶ of battle and the noise of the trumpet. Nought else was heard. Sometimes a sword⁷ clove chain armour like water ; into the eyes of some an arrow stole like sleep ; into the hearts of some a lance⁸ crept like love ; halberts penetrated the heads of some—the merry (halbert) knew, as 'twere, that the brain was the part of man's body where God had

¹ Ch. omits "the earth . . . flags," and then goes on : "Among the many kinds of flags . . ."

² *Artsivi*, R., 228.

³ *Deorbi*, var., *orbi*.

⁴ Ch., "so dusty" instead of "suddenly."

⁵ Ch., "variegated"; *dcharmaic*, 145. R., 1331.

⁶ *Karisa*, var., *kosisa*—copper drum.

⁷ Ch., "The warriors seemed tongueless. Nought was heard save the noise of the wind of battle and the trumpet. Sometimes a sword . . ."

⁸ Ch., "arrow" instead of "lance."

implanted the soul.¹ The sword entered by one path and the spirit came forth by the same path. The swords were like a blue cloud of steel, but it rained, and the stream which came forth from it was red. In the battle the arrow was like a sempstress, for it sewed the bodies to the saddle.

Until evening the two armies prolonged the battle. In the thick of that fight some were like coursing leopards² and some like wild goats. The well-beloved Vis's father,³ Qaran, was slain by his foes, and round about him were slaughtered a hundred and thirty nobles, braves of Viro. You might say it rained drops of a rain that was death. So many men were slain that heap⁴ upon heap of corpses lay piled, and round about them flowed streams of blood.

When Viro saw his father, Qaran, slain, and so many nobles lying devoted beside him, he called to his magnates:

"Brothers! in a battle sloth is monstrous and a shame to brave men. Are you not ashamed⁵ that so many of your race | are massacred for the enemy to rejoice over? Are you 31 not ashamed for Qaran that his white beard has been crimsoned by blood? And that such a monarch miserably lies slain? Is there no avenger of blood among so many of his warriors? The sun of heroism and of glory-seeking⁶ is set, for no one of you seeks any longer fame or heroism. I have not yet avenged his blood, and have not rejoiced myself over the foe. Now night is falling and it grows dark. The soldiers retreat. From morning you have shown great bravery and waged battle, now I will attack, and let your prowess⁷ help me and aid me to avenge my father's blood. And be ye all like dragons⁸ in the search for blood and in boldness, so that I may not bring shame on my race. Now are the days of death from my sword. Fate and the world I despise. I will be delivered from shame and from the

¹ Ch., "The merry one knew where God had placed man's soul in his body."

² *Avaza*, 56. R., 1137.

³ Ch. omits "In the . . . Vis's father."

⁴ *Gori*, R.

⁵ Ch., "You are shamed."

⁶ Ch., "blood-seeking."

⁷ *Golial'hoba*, 179. R., 1511.

⁸ *Veshapi*, 131.

rotten Moabad, and rejoice the soul of my father by slaying him."¹

When he had spoken thus, he fell upon them, together with his nobles, men-at-arms² and household troops³; like fire he burned, and there was no help for him—(? was not master of himself). Moabad's soldiers were like a flood rushing down a mountain slope, for they could no longer conceal themselves. Their caress was lance, sword, and arrow. In slaying one another, friend was worse than foe; father became heedless of his son, son of his father, and friend of his friend. Whoever met another spared not to slay. It became so dark that nothing could be seen before the eyes. Brother slew brother, and father son. The lances were like spits, 32 instead of roast meat there were men; and the earth, | from the flow of blood, was like a wine-press. Death was, as 'twere, a mighty wind which blew down men's heads⁴ like leaves from a tree; the heads of the warriors were like balls in the playground, and their bodies like felled trees in a thick wood.⁵ When the sun set, it seemed as if Moabad's fate set with the sun, and fate had cut off hope of the monarchy of Moabad.

Moabad fled even unto Ispaan and Khuarasan. And when his soldiers saw him flee, all fled. The leader of his soldiers was slain, and if night had not fallen Moabad himself could not have escaped. But Viro and his magnates no longer pursued. They thought that Moabad was fled, and would not fight them any more again as long as he lived.⁶

His opinion was one thing, and God's decree was otherwise.

When Viro saw that Moabad had fled, he rejoiced, and lo! he had not alighted from his horse before the Delamis and

¹ Ch., "I will deliver the soul of my father from shame and from the rotten Moabad," and omits "and I will rejoice . . . slaying him."

² *Mona*, 89, slave.

³ *Khasagianit'ha*.

⁴ Ch., "men" instead of "men's heads."

⁵ Ch., "their bodies in the dust," instead of "in a thick wood."

⁶ Ch., "They thought: Moabad is fled, and while Viro is living he (Moabad) will fight no more against him (Viro)."

Gelanis and the Kiamanis,¹ countless as sand, the hair of beasts, rain, and the leaves of the trees, fell upon² Viro. Viro's soldiers and the outlanders, whoever was foreign, all fled without engaging the Gelanis and the Delamis, because they were marvellously many, and their leaders³ were renowned for valour. When Viro knew of their coming and of the flight of his soldiers, he was astonished at the deed of Fate, which is inconstant; its | sorrow and joy are a pair, 33 like the light of day and the darkness of night. In this fleeting world there is more grief than joy, and the heart of the wise and prudent is timorous in Fate's hands. When Fate had rejoiced over Moabad, the same Fate frowned on his foes. With a sweaty and dusty face⁴ he (Viro) stood, his bloody sword he sheathed not; with a few soldiers he directed himself against the king of the Delamis in battle with naked sword.

When Moabad heard this news, how the Delamis and the Gelanis had gone against Viro, at the same moment he turned back, and since he felt no fatigue, he returned so swiftly that the wind could not overtake his dust. He came with his army to Gorab, where was the house and abode of Vis.⁵

¹ Var., "Kirmanis," or, "the Gelanelis and Iamanels," 130.

² *Daeskhnes*, ? "were let loose on," 41. ³ Ch., "leader."

⁴ Ch., "Viro's face was sweaty and dusty."

⁵ Ch., "Viro," instead of "Vis."

THE INVESTMENT OF VIRO'S CASTLE BY MOABAD, AND THE
DISCOURSE OF VIS

WHEN Vis, the mistress of all beauties, beheld herself caught in a net, her father slain, her brother¹ gone away to battle, she was left sick² and sore in heart. She scratched her face with her nails; she began to weep and cry aloud, and in tears she thus addressed her nurse:

“ This day there is beneath the azure sky and upon the black earth no one more wretched and heartsore than I, and I know not to whom to tell my grief, nor in whom to seek my strength; at such a time, of whom can I seek justice, and to whom can I complain of the unjust deeds of Fate? How can I come to Viro,³ and how can I be delivered from the old, decrepit Moabad? On what day⁴ and under what planet did my mother bear me, since from the day of my birth I have been in grief? Why did I not die before my father, for I have seen him slain by the hand of an enemy! They have killed my father, my brother⁵ has gone away from me, and I am left, such a powerless creature, sick and sore at heart. If I weep and sigh, none⁶ hearkens to my sighing and weeping, none appears to help and support me. Since I was born much woe and ill-chance have I seen, and as for the future, I know not what I shall see. Worse than

¹ Ch., “ husband ” for “ brother.”

² *Ghvidzl-damtsuari*—liver burnt up.

³ Ch., “ To whom can I turn ?”

⁴ Ch. omits “ on what day ?”

⁵ Ch., “ brother ” for “ husband.”

⁶ Ch., “ who ” for “ none.”

| this could not happen,¹ that unwillingly I should fall into 35
the hands of my enemy and the seeker of blood. If I fall
into Moabad's power, I shall be removed from every desire
of the heart, I shall fall among foes, and shall be far from
them that love me."

In this manner discoursed Vis, queen of beauties, to her
nurse, and down her crimson cheeks her pearly tears flowed
like a torrent.

There came to her an envoy from Shah Moabad with the
following message :

"Let thy heart be calm, O sun of suns, brightest of all
the lights of heaven! Thou canst not evade God's decree,
and what thy planet has fated for thee that thou canst not
undo. Surely thou thinkest not to overcome the decree of
God! If God and my fate have given thee to me, it avails
thee not to enter into² a conflict with God's decree. God's
providence hath brought this about, and thus is it written
on thy head.³ Now there is no resource left to thee but
submission. I am come hither after thee, for I can no longer
endure my love for thee. If thou wilt be obedient and not
unwillingly mine, I shall fulfil many a desire of thy heart,
also I shall load⁴ thee with precious stones and ornaments
of infinite price, so that the sun and the moon shall be
jealous of thy beauty. Be thou the medicine of my soul
and heart, the absolute⁵ queen of my palace and realm. I
shall have my desires fulfilled in thee, and thou shalt find
in me fame and greatness for thyself. As long as my soul
stays within my body, thee and my soul I shall consider as
equal."

When Vis, deprived of heart, heard this message from
Moabad, she listened to it as it were all insult and outrage.
| She sprinkled earth and ashes on her head, with both fists⁶ 36
she made her face and breast lilac-coloured,⁷ tore off her

¹ Ch., "What worse than this could happen?"

² *Mogecerdeebis.*

³ Ch., "opposing God, to fight providence is not well." The Georgians believe all a child's fate is written on its forehead at birth. 89

⁴ *Agavso*—lit., "fill."

⁵ *Nebieri*, 67.

⁶ . . . *orisave djighvit'ha* (*mdjighvi*).

⁷ Ch., "ruby-coloured."

necklets; her crystal breast was bared, and she was so disturbed and enraged that she felt no shame before the messenger, and with her lips, sweet as sugar, she returned a reply bitter as gall,¹ and instead of love she cast the lance of enmity, and thus addressed the envoy :

“ Now I have listened to this evil message which in taste is like the horror of a serpent.² Get thee gone! and say thus from me to the brainless, decrepit Moabad: In hope of me, drive not the ball on ill-luck in the field. Take not on thee useless grief and cast not thy treasure³ away on a vain deed. I know thy manliness from thy behaviour, and thy liberality is degrading to me, and surely thou dost not think that thou shalt lead away Vis from this castle alive or seize her! In thy days, how canst thou find joy in me? If thou art master of all sorcerers, Viro is my lord and husband—in form a cedar⁴ and in face a moon. In this fleeting world thou canst find no joy in me, and I shall never see one like him. Whom else should I choose better than him? In thy days thou shalt find no joy in me if thou stay here everlasting, because I am wedded to my brother Viro, I have become weary of the love of all men.⁵ As long as I have a straight cedar⁴ I shall seek no bent willow,⁶ and even if Viro were not my husband and I were unwed, even then wifedom and love with thee would not be for me, because thou hast mercilessly⁷ slain my father Qaran, and hast not 37 spared his rank and | age. Thou hast slain my lord, my father, and to seek me as thy wife now is madness. How can I wish to wed thee, since as long as I have life the sight of thee annoys me? I have none like Viro in this fleeting world, and because of thy deeds and my mourning I have not even given myself to him. Now, how shall I give myself

¹ Ch. omits “ sweet ” and “ gall.”

² Ch., “ Now what distasteful message have I heard? It is like the horror of a serpent.”

³ Ch., “ Do not cast the ball in the *moedan* of mischance. Do not see profitless grief in hoping for me, and cast not thy treasure. . . . ”

⁴ *Nadzvi.* ? pine, 53.

⁵ Ch. omits from “ If thou art master ” to “ love of all men.”

⁶ *Tiriphi*, 201.

⁷ Ch. omits “ mercilessly.”

to thee, decrepit and crippled by old age?¹ Even I in this my youth fear God because of eternity. How canst thou in thine old age forget God? . . . I have many robes, precious stones, pearls, cities and lands; God has given me all these without stint. I desire not thine, and as long as I remember the death of my father Qaran I shall not take in my hand precious stone, pearl, and ornament, neither shall I use them. Then how can queenship become me if thy brocade, jewels, and pearls seduce me? Or what seems this to me, for I too possess such, and what is there for me to admire? Am not I high born?² Now have no hope of me, for thy hope will bear no fruit from me. If thou art a seeker in hope of what belongs to another, from despair a great dishonour will come upon thee. Haste not to see me, for thou shalt seize me too late. And if Fate play me false, and, against my will, give me to thee, thou shalt have no fruit, nor for a moment shalt thou sit down joyful at my side. My chosen brother and husband has not yet found his heart's desire in me; how shalt thou seek thy desire? Even if thou be the sun itself, | my pure³ body I have not³⁸ given to my brother, though he and I are born of one mother. How then shall I give it to thee, thou old, bent man, by whose hands my house has been laid waste? When I think upon thy name I shudder. How canst thou seek thy desire from me with such love! Although I am royal and powerful beyond desire, I cannot make a friend of an enemy.⁴ *Araci*: From a bitter tree comes bitter fruit. Even if we sprinkle (each other) with sugar-water, it would not unite one with the other in friendship, because one of us is glass and one iron.⁵ I will become obedient to love when falcons and partridges become obedient to each other. To seek love from this heart is like eating gall.

¹ Ch. omits from "How can I wish" to "old age."

² Child of my race.

³ *Uzado*—intact, immaculate. R., 1468.

⁴ Ch. omits from "Or what" to "an enemy."

⁵ Ch., "If thou waterest it (the tree) with sugar-water, how could it unite us one with the other in friendship? Because one of us is glass and the other iron *in love*."

This advice will be bitter to thee, but if thou hearkenest, its fruit will be as sugar. If thou art wise, listen and learn, that thou mayst remember this my saying: When thy folly¹ brings evil upon thee, repentance of the past will not avail thee."

When the Shahinshah's man heard this, he found no sign of love in Vis. He went away to his master and told her story and her coldness² of heart to Moabad fully, just as he had heard it from her. Moabad became more mad with love, and listened to all her message without missing a word;³ and of all, this pleased him most: how Vis had said that her brother had not yet found his heart's desire in her, and he rejoiced that his wife was a virgin.

39 Now the matter was thus: on the night when | they were wedded Viro was merry; suddenly at the time for repose, by the will of God, when Vis went towards the bed, at that very moment it came to pass that it was with her after the manner of women. Viro's wedding night was a disappointment to him, but he could do nothing, for it is a law with the fire worshippers that when a woman is unclean her husband must abstain from her until the proper time, and, like the Hebrews, must not approach her; and if a woman hides it, they separate her from her husband. For this reason they had remained apart from each other. And then came the soldiers of Moabad, the Gilanis and Delamis.⁴

When Moabad knew of her virginity, he became mad and hastened impatiently to his officers to seek every means of carrying away Vis. Although the bride be exceedingly pretty, the wedding of Moabad was very bitter, and also for Viro it was bitter, for he could not find his heart's desire. And Fate added war to war, strife to strife, and woe to woe. He could not repose one minute. In his new virility he was so much transported that he even forgot his realm. Viro's soldiers and his also troubled him. Each forgot his

¹ Ch., for "folly," "wickedness."

² Ch., for "coldness," "tyranny" (imperiousness).

³ Reading *ucleblad* for *ucudavebad*.

⁴ 34.

joy; it was as if Viro's joy was a lighted candle, and suddenly the wind blew it out.

When Moabad was assured of the virginity of Vis, he could no longer find his way from love.¹

Moabad had brothers²: one was called Ramin, and one Zard. He called both, seated them before him, and told them concerning Vis.

Ramin from childhood was in love with Vis: when they³ were both brought up in Khuzistan by the nurse, even then the boy loved Vis; but he declared it not, and kept it in his heart. His love and desire were like a cornfield dried by a drought,⁴ hope of fruit for the harvest was cut off. When Ramin came a second time to the nurse at Gorab, and heard the name of Vis, again his love was watered; and as the dried corn is by water made green, so Ramin became hopeful of eating fruit. His heart, which had grown old for love of Vis, was rejuvenated; love was renewed in Ramin. His tongue could no longer bear inaction, and he said a hasty word to his brother Shah Moabad.

Araci: He in whose heart the fire of love burns cannot bind his tongue, he is constrained to speak. The tongue released the secret from custody. May God not make it lord of anyone against his will, for it brings great shame upon such an one. The heart is the tongue's keeper, and no unpleasant word is spoken without the heart.⁵

Since Ramin's heart was boiling with love for Vis, he sullenly⁶ spoke thus to his brother Moabad:

"O sovereign! why dost thou trouble thyself so much in seeking Vis?⁷ Do not without a cause give away the treasury for a vain thing, for thou shalt see great grief, and shalt dissipate somewhat⁸ of thy treasure in vain.

¹ Ch. omits from "and of all, this pleased" to "from love."

² Ch., "two brothers."

³ Ch., "Kept in his heart his love and desire. He was like a dried cornfield in a drought."

⁴ Ch. omits from "The tongue released . . ." to the end of the paragraph.

⁵ *Cush tad*, 65. R., 10, 757, 1209, 1462, 1464.

⁶ Ch. reads "for the sake of Vis," and omits "seeking."

⁷ *Pashta*, R., 406.

“*Araci*: When thou sowest on a salt place,¹ thou remainest 41 bereft of seed | and increase alike. Never will Vis love thee, nor will this enterprise of thine have any success.

“*Shegoneba* : Thou mayst seek a precious stone as much as thou wilt, thou canst not find it if thou happen not on its place. Now thou art seeking love and alliance with a child whose father thou hast slain. Neither will Vis be affrighted by the multitude of the soldiers, nor will she be seduced by jewels, pearls, and adornments. Thou shalt get Vis with great trouble. But thou shalt not be able to bear the trouble which thou shalt see from her. When an enemy is seated in thy house,² it is as if thou hadst a serpent in thy sleeve.³ If water comes in from outside to thee it may be of use; but if it rises from the inside (?) of the house) it is of no profit at all. The worst of thine affair with Vis is this: that thou art an old man and she is young.⁴ If thou weddest a wife, wed somebody else. It is said: ‘The young to the young and the old to the old.’ Just as the aged prefer the young, so also the young desire the young.

“*Araci* : Thou art the autumn and Vis the spring, and it is a hard task to unite you. If thou placest her at thy side against her will, take this to heart: that from her thou shalt see no joy, thou shalt always repent thy deed. If thou approach her,⁵ thou shalt not be able to bear the trouble and evil she shall cause thee; and if thou shalt then part from her and separate, neither shalt thou have power and strength to do so.

“*Shegoneba* : The extent⁶ of⁷ love is like a sea. Its bottom and shore are not seen. An thou wilt, easily mayst thou go into the sea, but if thou wilt no longer (stay), it is difficult to get out.⁸

“*Hukumat’hi*⁹-*Shegoneba* : Now, thou seekest for thyself 42 | to-day such a love as will bring thee mischance to-morrow.

¹ Cf. 208.

² Ch., “bed” for “house.

³ Ch. omits “in thy sleeve.”

⁴ *Qma*, 84. R., *passim*.

⁵ Ch. omits “If thou approach her.”

⁶ *Asaci*, R., 859.

⁷ Ch. omits “The extent of.”

⁸ *Daekhsnebi*, 32.

⁹ Ch. omits from “An thou wilt” to “*Hukumat’hi*” (inclusive).

If thou knewst how truly I speak—I seek to benefit thee by what I say—thou wouldest hearken¹ to my advice. And if thou hearkenest not, thou harmest thyself."

When Moabad heard this discourse of Ramin and his advice, he became embittered as by an illness. He was mad for love, so that sugar in his mouth would have been bitter. Though Ramin's advice was a medicine² for love, the Shahinshah's love was thereby increased. The heart full of love hearkens not to advice, mischance seems like joy in the search for (the fulfilment of) desire. When a man loves, the more he is hated the more he will love. As a serpent in its old age becomes a dragon, so when love becomes old it becomes harder to deal with. If the reproach of men were a whetted sword³ the lover would offer his liver as a shield; if a black cloud stood upon love, and from it rained forth on his head stones of blame,⁴ neither would the lover then be afraid. In every (other) affair harm is heavy to a man, but (if it come) from love he rejoices in it. However much that is shameful they say to the lover concerning his beloved, they can never thus remove his love from his heart.⁵ A lover should not be reproached. He who is not a lover neither is he a man.

Moabad's heart was so full of love for Vis that Ramin's advice seemed like a lancet.⁶ He secretly said to his other brother, Zard: "Seek some means that I may get hold of Vis; what shall I do that I may find my heart's desire and that my | glory may not pass? If I retire from this castle 43 without Vis, I shall be despised⁷ in this land, and become a byword."

His brother Zard thus replied:

"O sovereign! this is the means: Send to Shahro great possessions, gold, adornments, and all kinds of things, and

¹ Ch., "hearken to this. Shegoneba : If thou," etc.

² Ch., "Although knowledge was a medicine."

³ Ch., "If the reproach of a man were many swords."

⁴ Ch., "hairs of reproach on his head."

⁵ Ch., "However . . . lover, they can never take forth from his heart love for his beloved."

⁶ *Shashari.*

⁷ Ch., "I shall be frozen."

seduce her with gifts and promise her numberless others, and with persuasive tongue cause her to fear eternity (for having broken her oath), saying thus: 'Shahro, thou knowest that eternity is the inheritance of man, and in that other world there will be a judgment of whatever ill one has done here. What answer canst thou give to God if thou art blameworthy and a breaker of oaths? If God ask thee: "Didst thou not swear by My Divinity¹ to Moabad, and hast thou not broken thine oath?" what answer canst thou give? Then wouldst thou not remain impure before God? Neither thy son nor anyone else will remain to thee² (to help thee in the other world).' Send her such a message. Even the wary are seduced by gold and sweet words."

This advice of Zard pleased the Shahinshah, and at that very moment he called a scribe and wrote a letter to Shahro; with many kinds of praise he flattered her, and wrote her seductive words.

¹ Ch. omits "by My Divinity."

² Ch., "will help thee."

MOABAD'S LETTER TO SHAHRO

"LET not thy head be bent in shame for the sake of this fleeting world, granted to us on a short loan ; for the sake thereof turn not thy back on God and thy face towards the desire of a *devi*¹. Be not one with breakers of oaths, since God is guardian of oaths. Thou thyself knowest with what a love pledge we became allied, how we swore by God and the angel. Thou didst verily wed thy daughter to me when she came forth from thee in thy thirtieth year and was born. God knows I am no despicable son-in-law; I am renowned, and why art thou become weary of me, why dost thou take part with mine enemies against me ? Thou didst bear her for my fate, why hast thou wedded her to another ? It has been my luck that the bridegroom has not found his heart's desire in her ; by the justice of God it would not have been seemly that another should find joy in her. If thou wilt consider well, thou shalt see that this has been the decree of God, and wed unto me thy sun-like daughter, and free thy land from mine enmity. As much blood as has been shed all will be demanded of thee in eternity, and if the devil² has not overcome thee, and thou hast indeed fear of God, it is better to leave enmity | and buy a great kingdom 45 at the price of one wench. If not, her land shall be laid waste by mine enmity, and thou desirest a retribution from God. In (thy) folly, think not mine enmity to be a small thing ; now turn from enmity to love, and I will give a great monarchy to thy son Viro. Thou shalt be queen of all Koistan, and thy daughter Vis shall be queen of all

¹ *Devi*—evil spirit, 65. R., 98, etc.

² *Eshma*, 177. R., 110.

Khuarasan. However many days thou shalt live, we shall pass them in pleasure and love in this fleeting world. All the lands shall be happy¹ through us, and soldiers and lands shall be calm. When the land feeds in pleasure, hostility is folly on the part of any man."

When Shahinshah had leisure from this letter, he emptied out treasure and gold. He sent such wealth to Shahro that human tongue could not tell it. A hundred camels wearing howdahs,² three hundred camels laden with treasure, a hundred geldings,³ and three hundred amblers,⁴ all adorned with complete trappings. Five hundred mules, all loaded with stones, pearls, and diadems, were fitted out. With these presents were also two hundred chests of gold tissue for head-coverings, and one great chest was filled with priceless gold ornaments; seven hundred crystal vessels, each so beautiful that it was like a star in the heavens. There were forty bales⁵ of Greek cloth of gold, each of a different kind; besides this, there were many other kinds of kingly things, whose marvellousness cannot be spoken by man. It seemed as if from every land | Moabad had sent all the stones and pearls to Shahro, and there were none left anywhere else.

When Shahro saw so many precious stones, gold, and royal gifts of all kinds, so many loaded camels and mules with treasure, she lost her wits like one drunken, and forgot both son and daughter. When night fell she opened the door of the fortress and gave the flashing moon (Vis) into the hands of Moabad; she feared God, and the letter from Moabad had changed her humour. The air began to turn in a fateful way over the castle. Shahro was taught by the constellations different conduct from moment to moment. When she opened the door of the fortress and gave the girl into Moabad's hands, in darkness it was black like the

¹ *Mordchmit'h*, 88. R., 303, 449.

² *Cubo*, 47.

³ *Taidchi*, hackneys.

⁴ *T'hukharigi* (*t'hokharigi*, *t'hokharici*) Cf. Sven Hedin, "Through Asia." ? Turkestan horse.

⁵ *Sapalne*, 197. ? 1,000 lbs.

colour of a crane.¹ The parting of lovers is very bitter. In the sky the moon and the stars no longer appeared; the earth was become dark blue;² the sky seemed a black curtain like a veil, in which the moon was muffled up; the air, you would say, had clad itself in mourning on account of her (Vis); the sun and the moon with their hosts battled in the west, there they were hidden and become invisible; the armies were steadfastly drawn up in their places; the constellations were like rocks of iron, and the stars had become wearied of them; the Ram³ and the Bull,⁴ hidden in melancholy, trembled in fear of the Lion, and left their places;⁵ it seemed that the Lion stood lifeless; and the Twins, like two lovers lying riveted together, had become motionless; the Crab, wrathful, with outstretched tail, was under the claws of the Lion; the Virgin stood like a wench, holding in her hand vine sprouts; the Balance, disturbed and disordered, had become useless;⁶ the Scorpion⁷ was become bent like a benumbed serpent; the Archer, like an idol, could not make war with his arrows; the Goat had lain down fearless of his arrow; the Water-bucket had fallen into the well, and its Carrier strayed woefully; the Fish was caught in the net, and, as if floundering on dry land, became hopeless from choking.⁸ Such evil constellations and misfortune did Shahinshah see with his wife. May God give no one else such a constellation.

47

When Moabad came into the fortress and saw these constellations—everything so unpropitious—he could see nothing before his eyes by reason of the darkness of the night, but the light and perfume of Vis's face caused him to find his peerlessly pleasing wife. He went and seized her crystalline hands and dragged her down from the fortress, for she would not go willingly, and he could not leave her. He led her away and gave her into the care of

¹ *Tsoro*.

² *Lilis p'heri*, indigo, 200. R., 385

³ *Verdsni* (plural).

⁴ *Mosuerni* (plural), young bulls.

⁵ Ch., "trembled; the Lion stood in fear in his place."

⁶ Ch., "The Balance and arrow, disordered, had become useless."

⁷ *Ghrincali*, 178.

⁸ Ch., "hopeless of remaining."

his trusty, good men-at-arms¹ and *khodjas*.² At the same time he placed her in the litter³ and sent them off so quickly that the wind could not overtake them. Round about the litter were the court *khodjas*.⁴ They played trumpets and copper drums⁵ and set out for Khuarasan, for the city of Marav, the residence of Shah Moabad. Moabad was as merry as a hungry lion which is set to guard a herd of wild asses, or as a poor man who finds a treasure and is rightly rejoiced. Since his prey upon the earth⁶ was fairer than the sun in heaven, it behoved him to guard her with great care, for suddenly he had found a vessel of beauty, and in it a smiling⁷ jacinth.⁸

¹ *Meabdjret'ha, abdjari*, 214. R., 200.

² *Khodchat'ha*, 12.

³ *Cubo*, 45, 164.

⁴ Ch., "overtake the litter. They set out; the courtiers and *khodjas* held the litter."

⁵ *Kosi*, 28, 30.

⁶ Ch. omits "upon the earth."

⁷ *Motzinare*.

⁸ *Iagundi*, 192.

VIRO LEARNS OF THE ABDUCTION OF HIS WIFE AND HIS
MOURNING THEREAT

WHEN Viro learnt of the deed of Moabad and the carrying away of his wife from him, he tore his neck-band, struck his hands on his head, and became unconscious. When he came back to his senses in that same moment he returned from P'heram.¹ When he came home the Shahinshah had departed and taken his wife away with him by force; he had left behind a hundred thousand precious stones, and in their place he had taken away the jewel of untold price. Shahro had broken her oath, and had no sympathy with Viro's plight. A raging fire was kindled in Viro's heart, and though he dared say nothing to his mother, he was wrathful and murmured against his sister. Hope of fruit from his tree had passed away, from his bed the sun of the earth had departed. He saw the gate of the castle locked and the beautifier of the castle gone forth to travel. Though the shell was empty of its pearl, yet from his eyes a thousand *griris*² (measures) of pearls gushed forth; sometimes blood flowed down from his eyes, and sometimes his heart was burnt with grief. He became so yellow and his colour faded so much that he looked lifeless. He cursed Fate and its treachery, that he could not rejoice in his youth even for a moment.

Though Fate weighed heavily on him, it made Shah Moabad very | joyful. It took away the heart-ravisher from 49 the one, and gave her to the other, and he (Viro) can never

¹ "Ancient city and kingdom in Asia Minor," according to the lexicon appended to the text (?).

² *Grivi* = 55 litres.

forgive the other to whom she was given, and who was rejoiced thereby. The palace of the one was adorned with gladness, and the garden of the other was faded for lack of the rose; one took up a stone and struck his breast, and the other took up a goblet and drank at will.

When Moabad's eyes were brightened by the carrying off of Vis, and he was leading away the sun to Khuarasan,¹ faring along the road Moabad made merry, and he forgot all the trouble he had ever seen. They went on, and when a zephyr blew from the litter of Vis, the earth smelt sweet. You might say the litter of Vis was a tower² of gold filled with musk³ and amber,⁴ and inside was seated the sun covered with gold-woven brocade. Sometimes from Vis's face roses fell, sometimes musk³ and amber.⁴ Her litter seemed like Paradise, and to all men was just as desirable. The judgment of God, which was to exhaust joy and gladness and increase grief, was approaching Ramin.

¹ 1, 45, 85.

³ *Mushci*, 197.

² *Coshci*, kiosk, 15, 120. R., 502

⁴ *Ambari*, 114, 197.

RAMIN BECOMES ENAMOURED OF VIS

MOABAD and his brothers and soldiers went on, and *khodjas* followed, accompanying Vis's litter. Suddenly, by the providence of God, there arose a great wind, and it tore the covering curtain of the litter. The face of Vis appeared; it was as if lightning shone forth from a cloud, or suddenly the sun arose; and at her appearing the heart of Ramin was taken captive. It was as if a sorcerer had poisoned Ramin, for at one look his soul was reft from him.

When Ramin saw Vis's face, it was as if an arrow of the length of a stadium¹ had struck his heart; from his horse he dropped, light as a leaf, the fire of love enflamed his heart, burned his brain, and carried away his mind. In the twinkling of an eye passion took hold of him, love deprived him of heart and soul. From his love such a tree came forth, whose fruit was roaming in the field and madness.² When he fell from his horse he fainted, and for a long time lay unconscious. His roselike face changed into saffron, and his red jacinth lips became blue as the sky; his life seemed to have fled without hope of return. Whatever magnates and knights³ were there, footmen and horsemen, surrounded Ramin, looked upon him, and none could tell what had happened that he was thus deprived of sense. Everyone wept at his thus passing away; | and by reason of his trouble all were grieved. 51

When he had lain thus unconscious a long time, he

¹ *Uterani*, R., 430. ² connected with verb *teva*, *teveba*.

² R., 17.

³ *Moqmeni*, 85.

neither heard the cries, nor did the smoke of perfumes nor the sprinkling of rose-water avail him. Then God had mercy, and he somewhat recovered consciousness; he had no power to use his tongue, and tears flowed forth. Then he wiped them away with his hand, and began to moan in a manner shameful for a man. All those standing near thought that Ramin doubtless had an enemy, and now the enemy had struck him. When Ramin again mounted his horse, by too much thought the bright day was darkened. He went along the road like a madman; his heart was possessed of a devil, and his eyes remained fixed on Vis's litter, like a thief who always would guard¹ the best treasure. Sighing, weeping, he said: "O! happy should I be if once again I might see her face, or if it might be my lot to be her litter-bearer on this road! O that she might but once hear my sigh, and that she might turn her eyes a moment and look upon me! O that some helper there might be, a seeker of favour, who might fully inform Vis of my plight, and convey my greeting to her! O might I but show her in a vision my breast dyed by my blood, would not her hard heart soften² towards me, and the fire of my love warm³ her? O that she also, like me, were enamoured, 52 as I am for love of her, so that she | might be even one half as much for me! If she could but perceive the taste⁴ of love, she would not be mercilessly haughty."

Sometimes Ramin would reason in this manner, and sometimes he would, with composed⁵ soul, gloomily, with downcast head, counsel himself to be patient, saying thus: "Woe! O my heart! What has come upon thee that thou art enchain'd and increasest thy punishment by vain wishes? What dost thou expect, or how art thou smitten with love of this moon, who will not think on thee at all? How canst thou expect union with Vis? What mortal has been united from then till now⁶ with the sun?

¹ *Mziri*, R., 416.

² *Morelba*.

³ *Moretp'ha*.

⁴ *Dchashnigi*.

⁵ *Daghebuli*. Ch., Dict., s.v., *dagheba*. ? *daghi*, 133. R., 220, 795, 875, 1352.

⁶ Var., "from the beginning till now."

Why dost thou hope vainly for her from whom thou hast no chance of joy?"

"*Araci*: Thou art thirsty and seekest water, but what avails it since thou art in the dry plain? May thy Creator have mercy upon thee, for very hard is thy lot."

Since Ramin was very firmly caught in the net of love, and was hopelessly heart-broken and heart-wounded, he was not able to seek his desire, nor knew he any resource save patience. Willy-nilly, his heart was not pacified, and he continued to journey with her unwillingly, and from being there no other boon was vouchsafed to him, save that from time to time the odour was wafted from the litter of Vis. Though Vis's face was his soul and heart, it was enough for him to gaze on her litter. There is no fate worse than love, no one is more to be pitied than the lover.

| *Shegoneba*: If a man has caught a fever, they come to 53 see him, and fear that he may die of the fever; but the lover's heart from year to year burns in the fire, yet nobody goes to ask for him, nor does anyone say: "Ho, comrade!"¹

What is more unjust than what happens to a lover from love! It is better that the lover should be pitied of all men, for an inextinguishable fire rages in his heart.

Araci: This is sufficient grief for the lover, that he is always in sorrow, and must keep the longing for his beloved a continual secret in his heart,² of no one can he receive consolation for his heart's woe.

As Ramin's love increased, he seemed like a partridge wounded in the back by the claws of a falcon—he was neither alive nor dead. His image as it were fared lifeless, of his mountain-like form only a sign (or target) was left, and of the symmetry of the pine,³ a bow. In such joylessness and grief, as I have said, he travelled, and the whole road seemed a dungeon to him.

¹ *Tznobilo*—acquaintance.

² R., 13, 14.

³ *Nadzvi*—cedar, pine, 36, 67.

HERE IS THE WEDDING OF MOABAD AND VIS

WHEN Moabad went in to Marav, there was with him the queen, the sunlike Vis. The city of Marav was adorned throughout, and like the planets of heaven the onlookers were raised upon the roofs; their magnates had strewn themselves with gold, jewels, and pearls, and the lesser folk with silver; the world was full of joy, and all walked on gold in place of earth. On that day Marav city was Paradise, and in it jewels and pearls were poured forth as rain. From every roof the faces of so many pretty ones flashed, that one could not tell whether they were stars flashing down from heaven; the sight of many kinds of singing women in their multitude and beauty made man merry and dazzled the eyes. When in the host there was such a sign, thou mayst know how it was in Shahinshah's palace: in size the palace was like a field, in height its tower was like heaven, and on the roof the stars sat to gaze; the door and the walls were all painted with gold. In pleasure, like the happiness of the fortunate, and in beauty like Vis's countenance, Shahinshah sat joyful on his throne, his heart purified from gloom like silver refined. His magnates, nobles, and bodyguard, by his will caused 55 gold | and pearls to rain from a cloud. So much gold and pearls he scattered that the heap¹ of pearls formed mountains. Moabad was merry, he drank and gave gifts.

Shegoneba: Be merry, drink and eat, be generous, that thy name may remain.

Queen Vis sat in the queen's place, and the palace was

¹ *Acumi*, Arabic.

made like a garden by her countenance. Though Shahinshah made merry, queen Vis sat full sullen, she grieved day and night, she wept like a cloud, so that whoever saw her wept with her. Sometimes she wept because of separation from her mother, and sometimes on account of Viro's love, and she cast lots;¹ sometimes quietly tears of blood flowed from her eyes; sometimes she began to cry out like a madman. She spoke not even one word, nor did she reply, whoever said anything to her. So to speak, every moment the caravan of grief came into her heart. In spareness she was become as thin as a needle, and by grief she became yellow as saffron. The wives of the monarchs and magnates all came to see her, and sat at her side; they sympathized and spoke pleasantly, saying: "By Heaven,² be calm, rest a little, and weep not!" By no means did she calm her soul, neither made she answer; and when she saw Moabad from afar she tore her necklace instead of scratching her face. She hearkened not to his conversation, nor did she show him her face; she continually bent her face towards the wall, and dammed the lake of her bloody tears.³ Thus was Vis on the road and at Marav also, so that even for one day Shahinshah could not rejoice 56 in her. Vis's mouth was like a vineyard, but the gate of the vineyard was firmly closed.

¹ ? *Tsilni qarnis*, 69. Ch., Dict. Cf. Acts i. 26.

² *Zenaar*, 79. R., 384, "We adjure thee."

³ Cf. Nestan's silence, R., 1136-7, 1159-60.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAMENTATION AND WEEPING OF THE NURSE FOR THE CARRYING AWAY OF VIS

WHEN the nurse learnt the news of Vis and how Moabad had come and thus taken her away against her will, the earth was darkened, and, so to say, her soul became like smoke within her body. She did nothing but weep and lament. By her tears the plain became the Mtcuari,¹ and by her lamentation the mountains were levelled. Thus she spoke: "O dazzling full moon, desire of the fairest monarchs, why has Fate become thy foe, so that thou art become a byword² in the world? While the spirit³ of milk and of the teat still proceeds from thee, why dost thou fill the mouth of every man with thy fame? And thou art not yet ripe, thou art like a pomegranate bud, and why is thy love ripened (noised abroad) from east to west? Thou art small, but thy name is great; thou art a wild goat, thy lover is a greyhound (leopard)⁴ and, like it, undesired. Thou art 57 blameless towards all, and Fate | has punished thee. God created the sight of thee for the sake of my soul, and how can I live without my soul? Let no sign of me remain on earth if I desire even for an instant life without thee."

Forthwith she caparisoned thirty swift she-camels,⁵ and loaded them with many kinds of royal treasure and gifts. She took with her whatever was necessary for Vis, she journeyed day and night, and in one week went to Marav, and as one who was soulless she found her soul. When the nurse saw the heart-wounded Vis, she was filled with glad-

¹ The River Kura, on which Tiflis lies, 77.

² *Saaracod.*

³ *Suli.* ? odour.

⁴ *Avaza*, 30, 75.

⁵ *Djama.*

ness at the sight, albeit she saw Vis thus seated on cinders, her face scratched, her hair torn, ceaselessly weeping, in an evil case, unable to find joy in her house and her youth; sometimes she poured ashes on her head; sometimes her tears of blood wet her lap. Her face, wounded by scratching, had become like a rusted looking-glass, her heart like her face had become contracted, and her form like her hair had become thin.

When the nurse saw her thus exhausted, her heart was burnt up with the fire of grief, and she spoke thus :

“ Ah, thou desired of all men ! Why slayest thou thyself, why art thou become thus pitiless to thyself by thy joylessness ?

“ *Shegoneba* : Why dost thou empty thyself of blood ?¹ Why dost thou pour it forth to the harm of thy life ? Thou art the sight of my eyes, and thou art the cause and hope of my happiness ! Do not this, whatever be the plight. Struggle not so hard with Fate, | since from great grieving 58 no profit nor joy can come. Thou art become thin and ill, and yellow. It was thy mother that gave thee to Moabad. Now thou art the wife of a great monarch, love him as thy soul. Be pleasant to him, do not sin and grieve ; for nobody who is wise and prudent sins against sovereigns. Inasmuch as thou art of royal birth and descent, Viro is not to be compared with this one in power, sovereignty, and wealth.

“ *Araci* : If thou hast lost a drachma,² God has given thee a precious jewel instead. And if thou art cut off from Viro, thou art united with so great a monarch as this one. If thy nurse cannot help thee, God sufficeth thee as a helper, and Fortune as a brother. If Fate has deprived thee of a silver apple, it has given thee a golden orange³ instead. God has closed a little gate against thee, but has opened a big one ; and if He has taken away an oil-lamp, he has given thee a wax candle. What has Fate done to thee that thou shouldst wish to weep so many tears ? Is not gratitude to God fitting for thee ? for he who thanks not God will regret

¹ Var., “ soul,” or “ breath.”

² *Drama*, 2.

³ *T'hurindji*.

it. To-day is the hour of thy joy, not of weeping and mourning. Now, if thou hearkenest, rise up from the ground and clothe thyself in royal robes, set upon thy head the crown of gold that befits thee and adorn thy sunlike face, beautify¹ the palace with thy presence,² and make the harem a garden;³ begin a conversation with sugar-like tongue, and set forth a banquet with thy rosy lips; with thy jetty eyes rob the onlookers of their hearts, and rejoice the heart of Moabad with pleasant kiss. Make night into
 59 day with thy flashing face, | and bind the sorcerers with the hairs of thy head; make the sun envious, with thy smile make the sweetness of sugar despicable, and put amber to shame with thy hair; cool the hearts of men towards women, and by mad love of thee make yellow the faces of heroes (ions). If thou clothest thy body in its raiment, so shalt thou be as I have said. If thou put all fair ones to shame, thou wilt rejoice all the gloomy ones when thou adornest thyself. Thou hast youth, goodness, charms, and rank. What dost thou seek more than these that God has given thee?

“*Shegoneba* : Let no one raise his arm against God’s decree, for no one can avert what is to come.

“Neither by thy crying out will Providence be affrighted, nor will the future be removed from thee. Why dost thou cry out against so much good fortune, and in vain let flow from thine eyes never-dying tears ? ”

Thus the nurse in many a way advised and urged Vis. But she hearkened no more to the nurse’s advice than to the wind. Thus spoke Vis :

“ Hey, nurse, thy talk is like a barren tree ; my heart is sated of life in this fleeting world ; I do not wish at all either to clothe myself or to sit upon a throne. My garment is mourning,⁴ and my throne is earth ; my banquet is lamentation, and my bosom friend is solitude. Neither will Moabad have any joy in me, nor shall I find in him good or glory. When I was near Viro I was a rose without a thorn,

¹ *Shemcev.*

² *Piri.*

³ *Sadedo tsalcotad*, 116.

⁴ *P’hlasi*, R., 1183.

and now I am a thorn without a rose. Everyone likes his own desire, and I prefer that desire be unfulfilled; | for 60 since Viro could not find his heart's desire in me, I shall let none other find his desire in me."

The nurse was ready¹ of tongue, and again began her speech, instruction,² and advice:

"O light of thy mother's eyes! It is not fitting that thou shouldst be troubled for Viro's sake, for he was thy brother as well as thy beloved husband; you in your intimacy with each other could not find a time to fulfil your desire. But it will certainly be thus, that if lovers were together for two years and could not attain their desire, and they were separated so that they no longer thought of union then they no longer expecting would regret for ever.³

"*Araci*: As a poor man who suddenly finds a priceless⁴ treasure and procrastinates, he takes away nothing from there, he thinks it is all his own, and when others come and carry it off, he cannot find it there, and he regrets for ever—even so was it with Viro and thee, and most grievous is his plight.

"*Araci*: That time and that day are past when a tortoise overcame two nightingales.⁵

"*Shegoneba*: A past lover is like a day that is past.

"If thou art prudent, do not regret the past. Do not sulk now foolishly and do not struggle. Hearken unto me. Sit no longer on the earth, go to the bath, wash thy musky hair in rose-water; take out from the coffer the raiment appointed for thee, apparel thyself, and sit down on the throne in the beauty that adorns thee, and set the crown upon thy head. For here come, indeed, | passing good and 61 well-born queens—some wives of the magnates, some lovely as the sun and dazzling as the moon, and all are adorned royally. I will not that they see thee thus, from deference

¹ *Cargi*.

² *Tsurl'ha*, 121. R., 402, *vtsvrl'hitza*; 726, *vtsvrl'hio*; *mtsvrl'heli*, 884.

³ Or, "then they would regret for ever the loss of all hope (of union)."

⁴ *Madjansa*, 118. ? worthless. ⁵ *Sharukhi*, P. ? proper name.

they, too, will sit down on cinders at thy side. Thou art not so ignorant and stupid; now thou knowest that thou art in a strange land and not in thine own home. If a man own nought, let him deck himself with borrowed things to appear before strangers.

“*Shegoneba*: The best thing for a man is to seek fame and to bind the tongues of strangers.

“Whoever should see thee thus will speak nought but ill of thee afterwards. Some will say thus: We have no honour from her, and let us do nought to please her. Others will say: Who is she, indeed, that we should wonder at her? This is fitting: if thou hast all knowledge, thou shouldst gain their tongue for thee. Whoever is seen by men to be disrespectfully treated, know thou that men will become hostile to him. And those who behave with pride, however good and charming they may be, their intimates cannot pleasantly rejoice in them. I advise thee this: chase away this hateful and bad humour for the sake¹ of these men, and not for Moabad’s sake; in any case to Shah Moabad thine ugliness will seem pretty, for he is madly in love with thee.”

When she heard this discourse from the nurse, Vis was pleased, and it rejoiced her heart, and she no longer found 62 it irksome to listen to the nurse. | She immediately rose up from the cinders and went into the bath. The nurse began to dress her, washed her head and body; she decked her person, tired her hair with priceless ornaments; she clothed her in her own garments adorned with precious jewels, she perfumed her with scents, uttered a charm against the evil eye, and breathed upon her. While the nurse was dressing her, Vis meanwhile wept, lamented, and spoke thus:

“O perverse and contrary fate of mine! Why hast thou forsaken me and become weary of me? The birds of heaven, the air, and the wind, can bear witness to my misery!”

When she had dried these tears and again become calm, her spirits revived, and she became so beautiful, that no one, however wise and clever he might be, could achieve one-hundredth part of her praise. She was so charming that

¹ *Gzit'ha*, 110.

if she had washed her face in salt water, immediately sugar-cane would have sprung from the earth about her. If jasper¹ touches her cheeks and lips, it immediately becomes red as jacinth. If she from above the tomb cried out to a corpse already turned to dust, even it would make answer. However fair and praiseworthy those who might come to see her, she would be like the moon, and they who came would be stars. Her neck and ears adorned were fair, and altogether she was peerlessly beautiful, like a porcelain² face in gold.³

Moabad that day sent so many gifts (?) to Vis) that nobody can mention them one by one: many a coffer full of gold, jewels, and pearls; many a garment of great price, withal numberless brocades, broidered at the edges; many 63 a cup of crystal, trays, and golden vessels, all inlaid with jewels; and scents of many kinds, and withal furs;⁴ and many slaves and handmaidens—Greeks, Chinese,⁵ and Balkhians,⁶ all pretty and untamed⁷ as wild goats, and yet as fair as peacocks in womanliness and beauty.

Queen Vis sat on the throne, and good fortune was the adorner of her beauty. All the earth rejoiced in her, and she sat gloomy; the congratulations and entreaties of men seemed to her as sadness and lamentation. Thus for a week did Moabad sometimes joyfully drink and dispense (gifts), sometimes tilted in the lists. Then for one week he went away to the chase; not a single arrow missed its aim, nor in the banquet⁸ did gold and treasure remain, neither in the hunting did a live creature escape; when the polo-stick⁹ struck the ball, at that blow the ball went up to the sky; when he drank wine with his magnates, for one day the harvest of the whole land for big bumpers¹⁰ did not astonish. There was a cloud of his will, and it rained gold. When the nurse had arrayed Vis, she rested not from tears; so to say, her grief increased every moment.

¹ *Amarta*, 185. R., 260. ? amber.

² *Chinuri*, Chinese, 26.

³ *Var.*, *oksinosa*—cloth of gold.

⁴ *Tqavi*—skin, hide.

⁵ *Chineli*, 75; *vide chinuri, supra*.

⁶ *Balkhuri*.

⁷ *Siksuit'ha*. Cf. *Ksu*, 77.

⁸ *Suma* drinking.

⁹ *Quandchi*, 70. ? racquet.

¹⁰ *Sadostaknod*—*dostakani*, R., 473, 1144.

THE BINDING OF THE VIRILITY OF MOABAD BY VIS AND
THE NURSE

THEN Vis, the world-weary, spoke to the nurse in privacy from men, and entreated her :

“ My fate strives with me day and night; my heart is sated of life, and the root of the tree of my joy is dried up in me. I know not if I have any resource but to kill myself, for can I be delivered from my present state but by death ! Now, if thou seek not a way for me, and save me not from this trouble, as I said to thee, thus soon shall I slay myself; for when I see Moabad it is as if I were burning in fire. To look upon death or on him seems to me all one. May God make Moabad’s life as bitter as mine. Though hitherto he has bathed his heart in the water of patience, and has not sought his heart’s desire in me, I fear that he cannot endure longer, and will make the hidden secret evident. Now, ere he seeks his will with me, do thou spread a snare in his path. Know this,¹ that I will not yield myself for a year, and that I am consecrate by reason of a death. The mourning for my father may not be shortened on his account. Until then I shall be thus. Moabad will not have patience with me for one year, and will not spare me, for he feels neither shame nor fear 65 towards me. Now have mercy on me, manage the matter | in thy manner, bind his virility with regard to me. When one year has passed, then it may be my mind will change, I shall prevail over my heart; and when Moabad at last is unbound, he will be as thy slave for having delivered him

¹ *Itzode*, 77.

from this thing. If thou do not what I have said, thou canst not rejoice at all in my fortune, for I want not an unfree life, nor joy with shame. I prefer to give up my life rather than fulfil Moabad's desire, when he says to me against my will: 'Do my will.'"

When the old nurse heard these words, an arrow struck her heart, so to say. The nurse opened her eyes wide, began to look sullen¹ and spoke thus:

"O light and eye of thy mother! There is no longer a trace of reason or justice in thee. A hateful devil has come into thee, he closes the road of righteousness and love. Through excessive sorrow thy heart has become blackened, and the blackness will never be taken away from jet. But since thou art become impatient, thou hast altogether lost reason. Now, since it is thus, I know no other way of doing thy will than by binding him as regards thee, because this demon,² which has entered into thee, closes every road to joy for thy heart."

Then the nurse took copper and bone, and with some sort of enchantment made a talisman; two in the likeness of Moabad, and one of Vis; she uttered some charm, firmly welded them one upon another with iron. The nurse was a rare sorceress, and these two bonds³ were made in such a manner that as long as they were welded together, Moabad should be bound with regard to Vis, and if anyone 66 undid these, at that moment he (Moabad) would be unbound.

When the nurse had arranged this thing, she went in the morning early at dawn and buried it at the edge of the water. She returned, showed Vis the place, told her where it was buried, and spoke thus:

"Though thy speech pleased me not, yet I have done what thou didst command for the satisfaction of thy heart. I have sought out means to fulfil thy desire, I have bound so peerless a monarch. And now when this month is past, then thou wilt chase away this humour and make me

¹ *Cushtad*, 40, 108.

² *Devi*, 44, 85, 110, 180.

³ *Chakhi*—bond, bond of twigs. Cf. Saba Orbeliani's Lexicon.

unbind. Then, thou wilt not tell me that it must still be thus. When thy heart is calm and thou art pleasant and loving towards Moabad, I will draw the talisman thence, I will break it in pieces,¹ I will unbind it, and burn it with fire, and you two shall rejoice. As long as it is in moisture, Moabad will be bound. Water is cool, and by coolness the male is bound. After, when I burn it with fire, Moabad will become ardent and will be unbound."

When the nurse had assured Vis of this, that it would be for a month, and then her heart would turn, and he should be freed, they agreed² together upon the time. Vis consented.³

Now behold what God's providence did, how it sprinkled poison on sugar. One day before the expiry of the time of their compact there came forth a black cloud from the sea, and such a rain came that every field was filled with floods, and the river of Marav increased as big as the river Djeon.⁴ There remained not one garden nor vineyard, nor any other builded thing which was not swept away. Half the 67 city was carried off, | laid waste, and that place which the nurse had pointed out was undermined, and Moabad's talisman was carried away. Moabad, alas ! remained bound for ever.

Araci : Vis remained in Moabad's eyes as the drachma⁵ of a rich man in the sight of a poor man, as to a hungry lion bound with ropes is the sight of a wild ass⁶ gently passing by.

Moabad was still alive, yet he envied the dead ; he had missed the path of joy and fallen upon bitterness. His foes rejoiced, and his friends were cast down. His dubious⁷ bed was grievous as a dungeon to him ; by night she lay at his side, but she was as far off as the end of a month's journey. Vis had wedded two husbands, by both she

¹ *Davlets*, 202. R., 166, 1016.

² *Aighes*—they raised, R., 59.

⁴ *Gihon*, 143. R., 731, and M. IV. vocab.

⁵ *Drahcani*, 87. R., 456, 992.

⁷ *Saedchui*. Var., *Satrphialo*—desirable.

³ *Dasdjerda*.

⁶ *Candjari*, R., 75.

remained a maid. Neither could Viro find his will in her, nor could now Moabad.

Behold what Fate had done to Vis: she had grown up delicately,¹ she had avoided shame, her body in its outline was like a cedar.² The full moon was her servant, the rose bloomed on her face, she ripened completely and without blemish; but what happened at last to Shah Moabad, the nurse, and Ramin—what lover knows the story, tears of blood will flow from his eyes! No lover has drunk such a draught of woe and varying chance.

¹ *Nebierad*—in luxury, 36, 88.

² *Nadzvi*, 53, 213.

THE STORY OF RAMIN'S LOVE

WHEN the matter had grown irksome to Ramin, the bereft of heart, and he became resourceless, and his fate waxed wretched through love, he would ever seek a lonely spot and sit alone; he wept without ceasing, and at night he had no sleep, he laid not his head upon the pillow. He stared at the stars, and besought God to change his fate. He had no rest, neither by day nor night. He roamed about like a madman; like a wild ass and a wild goat he avoided men. Wherever he saw a cedar,¹ it was to him the likeness of the form of Vis, and he could not tear away his eyes; wherever in a garden he found a red rose, he kissed it for its likeness to her; every morning he gathered violets and put them on his heart in place of her tresses. When he had respite from weeping, his constant companions² were the *ordzali*³ (a two-stringed instrument) and feasting.⁴

Wherever the instructed⁵ lover may be, in many divers and strange kinds of strains he sings sweetly, all on the absence of his love. When he sighed, the wintry wind 69 blew. At his sighs man's heart felt as 'twere a nightingale cast down from a branch. In his tears he wept so much blood that he was mired⁶ in mud to the knees. Daylight was as darkness to his eyes. The pleasant couch of brocade under him was like a serpent. So pitiable he was and restless from love, he came not near wine at all, for fear that when he drank, wine might rob him of all patience.

¹ *Nadzvi.* ² *Ariphi*, 124. R., 1143. ³ *Ordzali*, 121.

⁴ *Nadimi*. ? for *nadirī*—hunting. Cf. next paragraph, "he came not near wine."

⁵ Var., "pitiful."

⁶ *Chaeph'lis*—buried.

Thus no one could ask him : What is this grief of thine ? He was burning away like a candle, he was melting, and his wounded heart was sacrificed for his beloved. For her sake life was made miserable, and joy wholly forsook his heart.

By his weeping his garments were stained with blood, and from groaning his face grew golden. By the pang of love his spirits came (unto) his lips, and continually his hope of his life and his love was cut off. The form of his beloved was imaged in his eyes, and sleep was put away from his eyes. The greatness of the world appeared like a palm's breadth in measure. By too much thought he became unreasonable, like one drunk and mad. Sometimes he thought out a means against the deed of Fate, and cast lots in the name of his beloved, and said : Shall her lot and mine be united at last ? Sometimes he went into Shahinshah's garden, wandered about, called all the trees to witness, and spoke thus : "O all ye trees ! Be my witnesses ; look on me weeping thus. When the merry Vis shall be here, say to her : Will you not purge your heart from an unjust deed ?" Sometimes he addressed the nightingales—he wearied them with many reproaches, and spoke thus : | "What so great ill on earth has come upon 70 you that you cry out so much ? What has befallen you ? Your loves sit beside you on the branch, you are not sundered as I am, and you are not piteously struck dumb (like me) !

"*Araci* : If you have a thousand kinds of gardens and pleasures, I have upon my heart a thousand kinds of brands. Since you cry thus to your loves beside you and moan piteously, what shall I do who have no expectation of seeing (my love) ! It befits me to moan and cry in season and out of season, for the ravisher of my soul knows not mine anguish."

After this fashion somewhat spoke he, and roved about in that vineyard with tearful eyes and seared heart. One day when the nurse had come out to walk she met him, and saw him thus roaming about. When Ramin saw the nurse,

necessary as his soul, desirable as his eyes, his blood boiled with joy, and his cheek, so to say, clothed itself in a shirt of poppy.¹ The nurse sweated from confusion. Although the garden is charming in spring, Ramin's face was a thousandfold more lovely. The roots of his ears resembled pure silver; the hyacinths² had not yet clothed themselves in black, and the musky vine-tendrils³ were become like polo-sticks.⁴ His chin was still a little camphor-coloured, his lips were like ruby, and his teeth like pearl; in form and stature he was like a swaying cedar, but the fruit of that cedar was a red rose, in face a full moon on earth, pleasant to look upon. His coat⁵ and hat⁶ became him rarely. In race he was famous and royal from Adam, in face he was like a living sun upon the earth, perfect in all knightly graces.⁷

71 | Whoever had to bear the test of⁸ looking upon Ramin, in that moment he sacrificed his heart exclusively to him. In two ways he was (famous) for birth and distinction⁷ upon the earth. He was a king's son and brother of Moabad, and was lord⁹ of his own land. When the sorceress saw his eye, she was confident, and bore witness: "This man is more of an enchanter than I am, and when a Kadj¹⁰ sees his face thus would he speak: In royalty thou art fairer than all fair ones."

Ramin, with such a fair face, by reason of Vis's face deprived of soul and heart and stupefied, was roaming. Outdoing¹¹ all philosophers, he had lost his way, and when he saw the nurse alone in the garden, it was as if he had met all the joy of the world, so glad was he. He saluted her, and uttered a eulogy on her.¹² The nurse, of course, reciprocated his civilities, they greeted each other, and

¹ *Qaqacho*, 209.

² *Sumbuli*, 197. ? his beard.

³ ? his hair.

⁴ *Quandji*, 63 (?).

⁵ *Caba*, 118. R., 85.

⁶ *Kudi*.

⁷ *Dchabucoba*, 22, 85.

⁸ *Gantzdit'h moundis*.

⁹ *Patroni*, 126, 163.

¹⁰ *Kadjî*, 73, 97. R., 190 *et passim*.

¹¹ *Tsadjobinebuli*. He was even more befogged than any metaphysician.

¹² *Keba sheaskha*, 83. R., 5, etc.

embraced like old friends. Then they took each other by the hand and went to a quiet place. They spoke of many things, and this conversation soothed the wounded heart of Ramin. He rent the curtain of shame, for his heart had been taken captive by shame, and spoke thus to the nurse :

"O thou more needful to me than my soul! Lo! before thee I am more slavish than a slave; speaking with thee and seeing thee brings me life! I entreat happiness, for thou art my mother and Vis is my lady.¹ My oath is continually by her life.² | Such as she,³ beautiful like the sun and of royal race, no other queen has been, nor ever will be, born. There is no pair to Vis but Vis herself; she needs none other. I may say, she was born by her mother so that she should burn every heart with fire, and especially, alas! me, who am become by my burning like a fire-worshippers' shrine. Albeit I am inflamed by her injustice, yet may her heart never be inflamed upon such a fire. Though my fortune has forsaken me, may the good fortune of happiness never abandon her. I shall die and burn for ever for love, mad love of her, and thus I shall say for her: May she never be in such a state nor pass such days as mine. As much suffering as I have seen for love of her, so much lack of suffering I entreat from God for her. Though I am thus gloomy for her, may she be ever merry!"

This pleased the nurse. When she had heard his discourse and reply, she, too, spoke thus with shame:

"Ramin, mayst thou go ever in health! God grant I may never hear of any ill or grief befalling thee. May thy fate be as good as my pupil, for in light she is like the moon, and by her goodness she makes all to rejoice. Beauteous as her face is her fate and condition. The back of her foe is twisted like her hair. I have heard all thy discourse, and I have listened without shame to it, (for it) is desirable as the sight of thee. Think not that she acts with injustice; I do not believe that she has either known thee or even seen thee."

¹ *Patroni.*

² *Mze, sun.*

³ *Misad odnad.*

Ramin again began to speak as follows :

“ The lover is more pitiable than all other unfortunates, 73 | for his own heart is his inward foe and, daily seeks his shame. Sometimes he sighs for the absence of the beloved, sometimes he burns on account of separation. However much grief he may see on account of his passion, it seems to him joy ; and however weary of soul he may become for his love’s sake, he cares not.

“ *Araci* : However much misadventure falls to a man in love, he chooses it all of his own free will. By the thought of his beloved the tear is dried in a man’s eye, and his sleep is frightened away ; he begins the bearing of the load of passion and accounts grief as joy. But his pleasure is the twin of bitterness, and his merriment is wretched as an owl’s.¹ The lover is like a drunk man in his passion, for to him an ill-favoured beloved one seems even pretty ; and, like a drunkard, his waking is like his sleeping in his delirium. Thus he chooses evil for good, for when love comes in to a lover, reason goes out. A conquering devil vanquishes him, and continually blinds his eyes. Reason and love cannot submit one to the other, for love disorders reason, neither does it allow discretion in business, and he tells every secret.

“ I have raised the veil of passion ; from my heart patience and from my soul reason have departed. Afore-time one day suddenly a wind arose, and a Kadj² revealed suddenly to me a most beautiful face. Since mine eye saw the desirable as Paradise, my merry heart is filled with a sorrow like hell. It was not a wind, it was my mischance, and Fate cast me down unfeelingly. In my youth I was brought up by thee, and thou hast seen me since then, but 74 thou hast never | seen me so pitiable. Now I am neither dead nor alive. From the strength of a lion I am reduced to that of a fox, and by sorrow my mountain is become a valley ; my mountain-like form has become thin, and my face has grown yellow as gold ; my eyelids have become to me as nails upon my eyes, and the hairs upon me like snakes. When I sat one day drinking with my boon-

¹ *Dchino*.

² *Kadji*, 71.

companions it was as if I were fighting foes, and if I securely wandered in the orchard I was as if I had lost my way in the plain; lying at night upon my couch it is as if I were drowning in the sea. When I am with my friends I am like a headless idol¹ in senselessness; when on horseback I am successful with the polo-stick,² even at such a merry time I am so gloomy that I am an object of pity even to my foes. I continually weep like the nightingale³ on the rose at dawn, and like the cloud of morning in spring on the hill. From her lovely eyes a hundred thousand arrows have pierced my heart, and irremovable fetters have bound my feet; I am like a wounded wild-ass, when in the plain the poisoned arrow of the slayer strikes it; I am like an unhappy little orphan boy cut off from his nurse and his parents. Now, I will ask an oath of thee, and I will seek thy grace as my only resource. Lead me forth from the burning fire, save me from the claw of the man-eating lion. Now show upon me thy skill and excellence. Pity me, a youth so bereft of heart. Thy pitiful heart has mercy on strangers, and madmen are pitied by thee; consider me one of them. I am such a madman, and in everything to be pitied, for I am enthralled by a red dragon which drinks men's blood. I know thou art good, so by thy advice increase | the pity that befits me. Say from me to the 75 beautiful, the graceful cedar, the speaking idol, the living moon, to the Kadj,⁴ the sun of the earth, to the fluent, sweet talker untiring⁵ among men, to the lovely one without blemish, to the musky-haired, the jacinth-lipped, the fruit garden blooming with joy, say thus: 'O beginning of beauties, for before thee the beauty of all beauties and heavenly lights⁶ has become invisible, the two-week-old moon is envious of thee, and it offers its radiance as a sacrifice to thee; the army of the sorcerers has fled from thy peerlessness, the Chinese beauties⁷ are put to confusion

¹ *Buthi*, 75.

² *Quandchi*, 70.

³ *Iadoni*, 185. R., 789, 1232, 1331.

⁴ *Kadj*, 73, 111.

⁵ *Ulevsa*. ? untiring. R., 52.

⁶ *Mnat'hotl'ha*, 9, 170.

⁷ *Chineli*, 63.

by thee, the idol¹ of the Barbarian is put to shame by thee, and its carver is disgusted with it. Thy lips make monarchs slaves, and thy mouth raises corpses to life. My heart is melted, and my body, by thinking on thee, like mountain snow by the heat of the sun ; my heart is, despite itself, pierced² by thy love, like game fallen in a snare ; reason and quiet have gone from me ; my heart in my body has become booty ;³ neither in sleeping nor in waking does sorrow seem sorrow to me, nor joy, joy ; neither do I rejoice at all in my royalty, nor in my treasures, nor greatness. I have no more gladness, nor do I even tilt in the ring on the *maidan* with the grandees ; nor do I hunt in the fields with the greyhound,⁴ nor do I pursue the partridge with the lordly hawk⁵ ; neither do I rejoice in the drinking of wine with banqueters, nor among the fair ones do I sit down in their intimacy. I can choose no treasure on earth save thee, nor am I free from grief even for a moment ; nor can I find pleasure in anything save the thought of thee ; I have no friend and no congenial fellow spirit. Dwelling in mine own house, I am like a prisoner, from twilight to dawn I 76 sigh and writhe | like a scotched snake. Thy discourse is a balm to my body, and the sight of thee is the enlivener of my heart. I shall immediately find consciousness of my reason again when I hear thy pleasant voice. Although I have grieved for thee a year, and by the turning away of joy my tears are crimsoned, my face is yellowed, nevertheless in my soul I prefer thy love. My soul is overcome by love of thee, I seek not life without thee, nor joy without thee. When my heart is satisfied⁶ with thy love, my hair on my head will become a sword. I have the light of day from thy face and the darkness of night in thy hair. Know this : As long as I live I shall be more devoted than thy slaves, and (even now) I am thy slave. Thy white-hued face is the giver of my joy and the disperser of my grief. My sun shines from thy face, and my musk yields its

¹ *Buthi*, 74.

² *Chaidchra*, 96. R., 1188.

³ *Iavar*, 142. R., 1081. ⁴ *Avazit'ha*, 80, 57, 118. R., 459, 1187.

⁵ *Mt'havarit'ha korit'ha*.

⁶ *Gadzghes*, 85.

fragrance from thy hair ; from thy form is my pure¹ crystal, and from thy conversation is the beauty of my Paradise, and therein is my dwelling when I shall see thy face which gives me life. Might² and success³ will indeed be then mine when it falls to my lot to gaze upon thy face ; I pray to God for this day and night, that He may consider me worthy of one sight of thee. If I show pity to so hard a heart and it meets with my compassion, let her not begin to coquet and be haughty. If it (?my heart) make a foe of me, seek separation and forsake me, certainly my blood will be shed. But it is not fitting ; by thy sun, it is not fitting to shed the blood of such a young man and slay him who all his days never did thee harm. So love him with a true heart | for he prefers thee a thousand times to life ; he ⁷⁷ sacrifices his soul for thy sake, and sells his eyes for the dust of thy feet, because thou so shrivellest up my heart that I have no part of it left to me. Be merciful to me ; I sacrifice my body to thee and thou art master of it ; if not, I shall sacrifice both my body and soul.' "

Araci : When the old nurse heard this discourse, it was as if a poisoned arrow had struck her heart. She pitied Ramin greatly in her heart, but she showed it not, and spoke thus :

" Ramin. . . .⁴ Thou surely canst not in thy heart have hope of her ! That sun will never shine on thee. This thy seductiveness and bravery⁵ are of no avail with her, for she is like a wild creature,⁶ and looks on no man. Think not even that by force or artifice⁷ thou canst unite thyself to Shahro's daughter. Know this,⁸ that it is better for thee to drive out this thing from thy heart, for but vain will be thy desire. At such a time as this a man should use all his powers, his knowledge, and his lordship of shame ; he will choose out the ugly from the pretty, the bad from the good, and in his heart he will choose the thing that is fitting. If thou fold up the sky and dry the

¹ *Utalo = uzado*. ² *Davla*, R., 777. ³ *Teaghmarti* (future), 184

⁴ The text is evidently corrupt here, and a phrase has been omitted

⁵ *Bidchoba*, 85.

⁶ *Erl'h-sakhe*, 87, *ken*.

⁷ *Ghonit'ha*, 79.

⁸ *Itsode*, 64.

sea by thy prowess, make the Mtcuari¹ to flow in the meadows, bring forth fruit from stone, raise a new world and place earth upon her hair by such sorcery and power —yet this will not avail thee in the matter of Vis. She will love thee and thou shalt find her heart then only when on the branch of a fir-tree² dates³ grow. Who would venture to convey | such a message to her, or who would tell 78 her such things? Thou knowest not the wondrousness of her humour, from which she herself always suffers. If I had even the courage of a thousand lions, I would not tell her this. At whatever time she learns this, and I tell her, she would be angry at me and deprive me of her favour.⁴ Thou thyself wilt not venture to do it, nor would it be fitting to thee that I should remain insulted in my old age. My pupil in her haughtiness raises her head to heaven, and will not in her pride vouchsafe a word to the sons of men. She will not be affrighted either by a great thing nor will she be seduced by great wealth. Now she herself is very melancholy, by her loneliness and by the fact that in a strange land she is isolated and removed far from her country; at every human joy she is affrighted and timid. Sometimes she pours tears from her eyes and blood from her cheeks, sometimes she cries out against her constellation and Fate. When she thinks on (var., was separated from) her brother and parents, like an aloe⁵ on a fire, she is burnt. She curses the day of her beginning and birth, saying: 'Why have I been born so unhappy?' Shahro entreated her fervently from God, and with a thousand luxuries brought her up. Now she sighs unceasingly, and weeps for her exile and all that has happened therein. Before her who dares to mention thee and this thy miserable message? Though I had more tongues than the rain, I would not sacrifice one of them for this embassy, and command me not on such an errand; for, as they say, the head knoweth not how to walk like the feet."

¹ Kura, river on which Tiflis is built, 56, 171.

² Ph'idchui.

³ Khurma, 153.

⁴ Piris tsqali, 95—Persian abru=water of the face.

⁵ Alva, 114. Var., alava (? hay).

| When Ramin, the bereft of heart, heard this discourse, 79
 he made the ground muddy with his tears, the fire of love
 spread over him, even from his feet unto his brain ; he
 tore open his collar, his coral hue was changed to saffron ;
 he trembled like a bird with its head cut off, he had no
 power to make his tongue obey, nor could he speak. Thus
 deserving of pity is the melancholy¹ lover. When he had
 been thus for a long time cast down, his heart again
 became calm. Then he began anew to speak to the nurse,
 he entreated and prayed with the impatience of great
 suffering. The nurse was just as unmerciful to him.
 However much he pitied himself and entreated, so much
 did the nurse deny him hope. Then finally Ramin em-
 braced her, soiled² the nurse with his bloody tears, and
 spoke pitifully. Thus did he speak :

“ Ah, nurse ! I adjure thee,³ I adjure thee—cut not off
 all hope from my soul, cut me not off from a life of youth,
 give me not up to the gall of Fate. What harm would it
 do thee to pity me, to loose me from the claw of misfor-
 tune, to open to me the door of mercy, and show me as
 a favour the face of Vis ? If I remain hopeless from thee,
 I shall die here before thee a certain death. Now I am
 become as thy slave, serve me and seek means for my
 deliverance from this woe. Thou art my balm. Upon the
 earth I know no one who can make me rejoice. Declare
 my passion⁴ to her, carry my message to that lovely crea-
 ture. Do not reason any more. When by cunning⁵ it is
 impossible to build mills upon the wind, to bring down the
 bird from the air, | to bring out the snake from its den,⁶ 80
 they are made to submit by incantation. Thou knowest
 how to make incantation. To think out means for every
 man is always thy trade.⁷ In the time of conversation no
 one is like thee in tongue, and none equals thee in deeds
 in the time for deeds. Now unite discourse and cunning

¹ *Daghonebuli.* ? helpless.

² *Dasvara.*

³ *Zenaar*, 55, 161.

⁴ *Gulisa pasukhi*—heart's answer.

⁵ *Ghonitha*, artifice, 77, 156.

⁶ *Khvreli*, R., 1220, 1896.

⁷ *Khheli*—craft.

together, and by both make Vis submissive. If I had not been lucky, I could not have found thee in such an unexpected¹ place."

Thus he spoke, he wept and embraced her ; he began to kiss her, at that moment. . . .² It was done as a sort of balm for love, thus did he love the nurse.

"*Araci* : When once thou art attacked³ by the desire of woman, thou art like one who has put a halter over his face."

When he had freed himself⁴ from the nurse and Ramin stood up, the heart of the nurse immediately turned towards Ramin, she rent the curtain of shame, she softened her surly speech, and spoke thus :

"O seducer, who surpassest all men in the excellence of thy tongue ! Hitherto even I have loved thee, but from to-day forward all disagreement between us is at an end, for thou hast made matters easy for me. Now, whatever thou wishest command me, and I shall not neglect to heed thy words. I shall fulfil thy desire regarding Vis, and I shall carry just what message⁵ thou wilt."

When the heart-wounded Ramin heard this, he spoke thus :

"O choice of mine eyes ! See how I shall serve from this day henceforth till my soul rises.⁶ Thou thyself knowest my plight. From twilight to dawn I think not to live, and from dawn to twilight I think not to survive. I am like a man alone in the sea who sees a great wind and 81 | waves, and from moment to moment expects to drown. I am thus through grief for Vis ; I cannot discern day and night from each other. Now, thou art my hope and power, help me in this sorrow and show thy skill in deeds too ; otherwise, to speak and not to do is bad. Tell her this : When wilt thou show me again thy happy⁷ face ? Until thou comest to see me I shall count the moments and keep

¹ *Uazrosa*—unlikely.

² Words omitted in printed text.

³ *Aigheb*, 88—thou art raised, roused.

⁴ *Moitzala*—had leisure from, had finished with.

⁵ *Movavlen*. ? use, influence.

⁶ *Amosvlamdin*.

⁷ *Suiani*, 85. R., 32.

my eyes on thy road. Until I with joy see thee again, until then I shall be burned on a fire."

The sorceress-nurse thus spoke, with a smile :

"Thou art a model of eloquence ; with so great entreaty and pleasant discourse thou wouldest draw an enemy over to thy side. My heart is wounded by so many requests ; by thine oaths and promises¹ the fetters are loosed from thy feet and cast on mine. Now, grieve no more, the time is come for thy deliverance from woes. Thou thyself shalt see thy desire, as I will fulfil it and change thy sadness to gladness. I will put Vis's reins into thy hands, so that whatever thou wishest she may be under thy command.² Come hither every day at this time, wait here for me. I myself will tell thee whatever I do."

When the two had made a compact they swore to each other, took each other's hands, kissed each other, and parted.

¹ *Anderdzobi^lha* ; *anderdzi*, 220.

² *Pharmani*, 134. R., 627, 1494.

THE PARTING OF RAMIN FROM THE NURSE AND HER COMING BEFORE VIS

WHEN the nurse saw Vis, she set in order seductive words with enchantment and treachery, and she expatiated on the pleasures of bravery.¹ When she saw the heart-wounded Vis so melancholy that her pillow² was moistened with tears by reason of the absence of her mother and brother, her garments disordered,³ the nurse spake thus :

“ Hey, chosen one of my soul, thou art not sick, why dost thou continually lie down ? Thy arrow-like form is become like a bow. Why art thou thus as if thou wert in a dungeon and not in Marav city ? Lighten the burden of grief. Man’s days are consumed by great woe and melancholy. There is no worse plague than grief, and there is no help for it but patience. If thou wilt hearken to me, sit up cheerfully ; fight against thyself and Fate. For a man to trust in God is a good support,⁴ and lack of trust in Him and grief are the avenger of blood to men.”

When she heard this discourse Vis became a little quieter, she raised her head from the knees of grief ; her face shone forth like the rising sun. The earth was perfumed with the fragrance of her hair, and the air became amber ; the earth was turned into Paradise by her face, and she adorned 83 | the palace. Her face was like a cloud in spring, for rain came from her eyes ; her eyes, despite weeping and lack of sleep, were fairer than narcissi at banquets. She spoke thus to the nurse, with tears :

¹ *Bidchoba*, 81, 127.

Shukhsna, 136 (*daekhsna*, 131).

² *Sast’hunali*, R., 514, 1126.

⁴ *Zurgi*—back.

“ What sort of time and day is this when, so to say, the fire of patience is burning ? Every day as a new day comes a new woe comes from the planets upon me—the fault of this Marav, or of the stars, or of the unjust act of the planet itself. This country is not Marav, it is the melting-pot of my body; this is no city, it is a great deep, dark well ; these halls are adorned and painted like Paradise, it is pleasant, but to me it is dark and painful like hell. By day my grief augments, and by night my misfortune. From moment to moment I am worse and worse. My fate is so hateful to me that it seems not to me that I live, and even hope of life itself is cut off from me. I saw the face of Viro as in a vision ; he was as he were sitting on his horse going out to the chase, a sword girded on his loins ; in his hand he held a lance, and he was making good sport. Cheerily he reined in his horse when he approached, and he eulogized¹ me much, and thus pleasantly he addressed me : ‘ How is it, thou beloved and soul of thy brother, that thou art in a strange land ? Why art thou, for lack of me, in the hands of the foe ? ’ Then I saw him as if he were lying at my side, he embraced me, he kissed my mouth and eyes, and he made whole my wounded heart. As he was speaking to me last night it is as if I hear his voice even now, even now his perfume is present to me. Since my planet shows me so much grief, I do not by any means wish to live. As long as I live this is enough of grief for me, | for my soul is 84 a corpse, and joyless, though my limbs are alive. Thou thyself seest, O nurse, that in this city of Marav there is no other creature of God as fair as Viro.”

In this manner she spoke, and tears of blood flowed from her eyes. The nurse laid her hand on her head, and the nurse spoke thus :

“ Ah ! light of thy mother’s eyes ! let thy nurse die in thy presence ; may God not let me look upon thy grief ! I hear this thy command, and I am heavy as iron and copper. Grieve not so much, embitter not in vain this sweet world.

¹ *Keba shemashka*, 71, 116.

Keep thy heart as merry as thou canst, for by joy days are added to man.

“*Araci*: The world is like a rest-house¹ or inn² for travellers, and we are wayfarers.³ Wayfarers tarry but a short time in the inn. Its bitterness and joy alike are outward, and men cannot tarry a moment in one place,⁴ they are like the shadow of a cloud.

“If Fate has taken away from thee one joy and desire, it has fulfilled for thee a thousand better. Thou art a fair maid,⁵ and a queen, and in royalty thy commandment goes forth over every land. Forsake not joy nor cast down thy mind into vain grief. Wherever on earth there is a young man, everyone of them is a seeker of his own desire and well-being: some in one way some in another undertake affairs and rejoice in them. Some like armies, some like wife and home, some like gorgeous slaves, some like ripe 85 girls. Likewise those | also who are within the curtain,⁶ wives and daughters of monarchs, and also of grandees, rejoice in many kinds of things. However fair and royal the husbands they may have, in secret they love and make love with others besides. Thou alone grieveſt day and night, and slayest thyſelf in vain; save Viro, thou thinkest on none and desirēſt none. Though he is a king and a king’s son, he is not an angel reared in Paradise. A short time ago thou didſt ask me if in the city of Marav there was another as fair as Viro, or if I had indeed ſeen ſuch a one? God knows that in Marav I have ſeen many youths⁷ fair as the sun, ſuch that man’s eyes cannot be ſated⁸ with gazing on them. In figure each is like a cypress, unblemished in face and beautiful, and in courage chosen and praised of every land. If perchance⁹ thou ſeest ſuch a man, each of them would please thee more than Viro, and

¹ *Sadgomi*.

² *P'hunduci*.

³ *Mokaravneni* (*karavani*, 204), R., 1007.

Dazmen ert'hgan.

⁵ *Qma*, 41, 96. ⁷ an unusual use of the word. *Cf. R.*

⁶ *P'hardagi*. R., 380, 382, 394, 505. ⁷ *Moqme catzebi*, 50, 98.

⁸ *Gadzhebis*, 76.

⁹ *Shemtque* (?).

among them there is one such lion-like hero¹ that man's mind cannot pay him fitting praise. It is as if these² others were stars and he the moon; and while these others are but as pebbles, he is a jacinth. Thus appears among those of the race of Adam the royal Moabad's beloved brother, happy³ and fortunate. His name is Ramin, an angel on earth and a *deri*⁴ in battle. He certainly⁵ resembles Viro in face. Every man and all the women of these parts are enamoured of him. Every brave youth¹ praises him, and in the lists none excels him. In Aran⁶ there is not so fair a horseman as he. With his lance he splits⁷ a hair. There is no archer like him in T'hurket'hi⁸ and Khuarasan;⁹ at his discourse many birds have become senseless; in combat, | like an enraged lion, and in largess 86 like the rain in the month of May. Despite so many good qualities¹⁰ with which he is endowed, there lies upon his heart the same brand, for in soft-heartedness he is like thee. O desired, beloved of every man, so to say, you are one apple divided in two. Behold, just as thou art, so is he. Through grief he is become like a hair tinted with gold. He saw thy face, he became enamoured of thee, and thinks with hope on thy love. His lovely narcissus-like eyes rain like a cloud day and night; his face, which is glittering like the moon, from lack of heart and from grief, is become straw-coloured. His heart has seen great grief from love, and he has drunk a deep draught of the poison¹¹ of love. I pity thee for thy love, and him also, for a pretty face in sorrow is pitied of all men. I see you both mad with love, separated, both deprived of heart and both joyless."

When Vis heard from the nurse this evil¹² discourse, for a long time she made no answer, and wept with fearful tears. She bent her head for shame at the nurse. Her

¹ *Dchabuci*, 71, 187.

² *Igi* for *igini*, R., 954, 967, 1028.

³ *Sviani*, 81, 91.

⁴ 65.

⁵ *Dia*, ? greatly, 197. R., 39, 116, 196, 338, 414.

⁶ ? *Iran*, 125; ? *Ran*.

⁷ *Goapobs.* R., *pobili*. • 126.

⁸ 49. ¹⁰ *Znit'ha*, 87. ¹¹ *Sumsalisaebr*, 180, 177. R., 1005.

¹² *Bedit'hi*, 87. R., 28, 364, 1113.

lips were closed,¹ and for shame she could not reply. Then she raised her head, and spoke thus :

“ A man’s best property² is shame. *Araci* : How well spake Khuasro to the warrior : ‘ Since thou hast no shame, thou mayst say what thou wilt.’

“ Now, if thou be endowed with knowledge and shame, such converse befits thee not. Thou doest great shame to me and to Viro also, since thou hast forgotten us and hast remembered Ramin. Even if hair came forth on my nails, 87 I would remember him. | I did not expect this from thee. If thou art my mother and I thy daughter, thou art the elder and I am the younger,³ do not teach me beauty and shamelessness, for unrighteousness brings women to dis- honour. My heart was even now cheerful and calm again when thou again hast sought an hour to seduce me. In this I shall be blotted with eternal shame, and cast out from pardon and Paradise. Though Ramin in stature be like a cedar, and in heroism excel Rostom, I have no desire for him, however fair he be. He is not my brother, though thou sayest he resembles Viro. Neither can he seduce me with his *drakhanis*,⁴ nor thou with thy discourses. Why dost thou even listen to his talk, and if thou listenest, where- fore dost thou dare to tell it me ? Why should he not fall sick ? Why should I not give such an answer as befits his despicable⁵ discourse ?

PARABLE (*Araci*) : “ How well spake Moabad to Oshang : Women are more drawn towards their will than towards glory ; women are born incomplete, therefore their desire always prevails ;⁶ they sacrifice this world and the next for the fulfilment of a whim, and they never think that in the end they may come to shame.

“ Why should I, who know the character⁷ and incon-

¹ *Shecra*—bound (? sewed together) ; *shecru*, 169.

² *Sathavno*—capital, 110.

³ In all the manuscripts : “ I am the younger, and thou sayest to me,” etc.

⁴ 67, 108, an ancient coin weighing 24 carats, or 96 grains. R. 456, 992.

⁵ *Bedit’hi*, 86, 202.

⁶ *Morevs*, R.

⁷ *Zne*, 86, 207.

stancy of a thousand, give away my heart? Woman is always man's prey. He always¹ captures her soon, and easily with a thousand entreaties and speeches deceives them, he swears to woman, and when he has accomplished his will | with her, he glories;² he no longer wonders,³ he 88 desires another. What he did at first he desires⁴ afterwards, and becomes loud-voiced. Through forwardness⁵ a woman at last, alas! falls into misery, and the man straight-way becomes weary of her. Alas! then the woman is bound in a net, she is carried away by desire,⁶ she has fallen from honour, no man will respect her any longer nor share her shame.⁷ He no longer will look on her, he scorns her, he does not praise her, but counts her shameful. Woman, alas! in waiting for (the realization of) hope melts like snow in the sun; in love she is like a beast wounded in the chase: she can neither stand nor flee. Sometimes she fears potions, sometimes her husband, sometimes she melts from fear and shame of him. In this world fear and disgrace, and in eternity the wrath of God! . . . And why should I do such a deed as would make me ashamed before men and afraid of God? If I am led away by the desire of the devil in this world, in eternity God will burn me; and if my secret be known to men, I shall be despised of all men. Then some will try to seek me, will sacrifice themselves to fulfil their desire; some will grieve at my shame, they will give me nothing but evil counsel; and when all men have had their will of me, no place will befit me but hell. May God always be with me, may He guard me on the right road, may my hope always be fulfilled in God, for save from Him it is idle to expect mercy."

| When the nurse heard this discourse from Vis, she saw 89 that there was but little hope for Ramin. She gave a reply in another strain, and spoke thus:

"Every man is happy or miserable by his constellation.

¹ *Erl'h-sakhe*, 77.

² *Moirdechmis*, 1, 45, 142, 215.

³ ? admires.

⁴ *Nebierobs* (?) 67, 126.

⁵ *Sheupovroba*, 147—frowardness.

⁶ *Aighebs*, 80, *nebasa* (?).

⁷ *Shertzkhuendebis*.

Whatever comes upon man's head comes by the decree of God; therefore is man's name called *mona* (slave).¹

(*Shegoneba*): "Thou seemest to think that one can by force or heroism cause the lion to abandon its lion-like nature, or by greatness and sovereignty give to a partridge a hawk's nature. By God is a decree written on the heads of all of us, and in life we cannot take off the decree of God, nor can the writing be changed by us, whether we weep or laugh. Now, that also will happen to thee which God has foreordained, it will neither be increased nor diminished to thee."

Thus spake Vis:

"Everything comes to man by Fate, but evil will befall him who does evil! There are many who do one evil deed and see a hundred worse (in consequence). First of all, Shahro did an evil deed, for she gave Moabad's wife to Viro. She did evil, we did not, and see what grief we too have seen. I am disgraced and my husband also, I am hopeless and my lover also. Why should I also do evil and then blame Fate? I may be despicable through unhappy Fate, why should I be partner in an evil deed?"

Again the nurse spoke thus:

"O my light, the peerless Ramin is not my son, that I should help him because of his sonship and free him from 90 his trouble. | If God and Fate help him, nothing evil will befall him, from the planets or from the world.

(*Shegoneba*): "Can it be that thou hast not heard from the sayings of the wise that to God all His desires are possible, by His Word the world and fate were created, and He has conceived everything moving in them, and their needs, as is fitting? He has made fields and plains for vineyards and for tillage, and has made great smooth places for palaces, He has made many great things little, and little things great. If thou hast grief and bitterness from love, thou canst not be delivered by thine adroitness.² If it be

¹ *Mona*, 31, 215. ? a play upon words in the original; lost in the Georgian.

² *Chaukobitha*. R., 57, agility.

God's decree, thou wilt have the victory; know this, that thou canst not doff what he has put upon thee. Neither gloom avails thee, nor greatness, nor thine arm, nor treasure, nor understanding,¹ nor sovereignty, nor modesty, nor honourableness. When love affairs come, they perforce subject men, ill and good. Then, except the hearing of reproach, there is no other way. Now, what I have said will be evident very soon. If from this fire smoke arises, what appears? When thou lovest someone so much, then thou wilt praise my words. Clearly shalt thou see, and I also, if I am thy friend or thine enemy."

¹ *Gonebianoba.*

THE NURSE'S SECOND VISIT TO RAMIN

NEXT morning she went to the place agreed upon. She and Ramin sat down. When he saw the nurse merry and gay,¹ Ramin spoke thus :

“ O praiseworthy nurse, what news since yesterday? Thou art justly merry, for thou hast seen the face of Vis, and hast heard pleasant converse from her.”

Ramin also asked how that sun was, who had hitherto drunk up his days.

“ Didst thou verily tell her my embassy and message, and didst thou inform her of my unhappiness and pitiful state through love?”

The busy² nurse thus addressed Ramin :

“ I went to that fair one, and I told her thy message. She treated me badly, insulted me, and gave this answer, which I now tell thee: ‘ Ramin, prefer not crooked to straight, that thine affair may not turn out crooked. Why dost thou entreat? Sit down calmly. Too much rule³ is not a happy⁴ thing for anybody; never expect to be united to me, do not cherish this hope. Go and busy thyself with thine affairs. If thou desirest love, thou canst find plenty of women in the world; let it be as if thou hadst never even heard my name; be not a follower of the devil, and do not 92 sin | first against God, and then against thy brother. If once thou wert to find thy desire in me, I know that I

¹ *Nishtianad*. Cf. *nishati*, 197. R., 323, 666, 707.

² *Sakmian*, 189.

³ *Mouraoba*—headship, governance, mastery.

⁴ *Suiani*, 81, 197.

should be so hateful to thee, that thou wouldest be shamed even at hearing my name. Leave me alone.' Thus she spake to me: 'Arise, nurse, all thy days presume not to speak thus falsely; and if I again hear such words from thee, thou shalt never see my face again as long as thou livest.' When I heard this from her, I ceased to speak, I dared no more, I was afraid that perhaps she would become weary of me, and I should be consumed."

When Ramin heard this from the nurse he trembled from love, like a willow in the wind. His heart beat hard, and from excess of grief he answered haltingly. Thus spake he to the nurse:

"Have pity on me once more, and yet again say from me: 'O shining moon and light like the sun! All men are not alike.¹ Be not unmerciful to me. If thou askest an oath from me, I will swear to thee with a thousand promises that as long as I live I shall be thine earth, more² than thine earth even. I shall never forget to love thee, I shall love thee more than my life, and from my body love for thee and my life shall come forth together. Never shall I renounce slavery to thee, either in joy or sorrow.'"

Thus he spake, and shed tears of blood in a stream. His eyes were like the clouds in May, in that their rain was inexhaustible.

| The nurse pitied the disheartened Ramin, for from 93 melancholy he was very pitiable. Thus she spoke to Ramin :

"O light of mine eyes! in love thou must clad thy form in the corslet³ of patience. Weeping betrays the lover, and ill will it befall him; great misfortune pursues the manifest lover. Instead of Vis, if thou wishest, I will give thee my soul. I will go and again attack Vis; I will clothe my form in the armour⁴ of shamelessness. As long as I live I shall not forsake thee. I devote my soul and life to thee. I know no heart more true in this than ours. When a man has a true heart he will achieve his desire."

¹ R., 932.

² Var., "lower."

³ *Ialmagi*.

⁴ *Djadchvi*, R., 426, 1346.

The nurse went to Vis, having studied a thousand kinds of discourse by heart. She saw how she sat with bent head. From grief her heart was like flesh burnt in the oven; from her eyes the tear which flowed unceasingly was like the cloud at Noah's¹ deluge; day and night she was in unresting grief. The nurse was always ready with her tongue, and she again began to speak. She said:

“ May God ever make him sit in sadness who causes thee this melancholy! God give grief and ill to him by whom thou art thus troubled and oppressed! He has taken thee away from the kin of thy home and bound² thee like a prisoner abroad; he has separated thee from thy beautiful mother and brother, you who seemed like one soul and one heart. But now in this strange land why dost thou continually act³ like one mad? Of what avail to thee is that reason which God has bestowed on thee? Since by thy reason thou canst not help thyself, I burn in seeing thee, 94 and I am sad by reason of thy melancholy. Naturally, a man seeks cure by his understanding, and by this dissipates grief.

“ PARABLE (*Araci*): God has given thee mind and reason, but thou receivest no share of joy from reason and mind. Thou art like an ass on whose back a sword is packed, and when he meets a lion it is of no help to him.

“ Now, how long wilt thou grieve so much and throw off thy gold rings (var., pearls and gold)?

“ *Shegoneba*: Do it not; have pity on thy youth. Add not woe to woe. Do not cry out continually in a strange land; curse not Fate and greatness. Listen, thy angel continually is present, day and night, and hears thee deny God and curse the day of thy birth. Thou art the queen of Eraq⁴ and Khuarasan, the sun and lady paramount⁵ of all beauties. Do not throw thy youth into the sea nor let that form melt in grief. Thou knowest how our days are begged

¹ Noah, 171.

² *Dagaba*.

³ *Badzav*, imitate.

⁴ *Eraq*, 125.

⁵ *Ukhutzesi*, 104—senior.

for, and when they are fulfilled they no longer return. The soul, indeed, is lovable and rare;¹ why is it so dishonoured of thee and hated? None is steeped² in grief for love like thee, and no one wounds himself continually in melancholy. If thou always grievest after this fashion—since thou art oppressed for thy lover—thou greatly lovest thy soul. Why dost thou hate him? Ramin resembles thy soul; he loves thee, and thou hatest him. Do not so, be more pleasant with thy friends; be like a fruitful tree in a vineyard. Have pity on that unhappy | youth; do not make him to 95 melt, and rob not thy body continually of joy. Be not merciless to that peerless hero. Cherish his love, who cherishes love for thee. If in thee none rejoices, thy face is like pitch.”³

When Vis heard these words she was perturbed, insulted; sulkily she answered the nurse with ill words and spoke thus :

“O disgusting and cursed by God! No more, neither of Vis nor of Ramin! May Khuzistan, whence thou art, be utterly laid waste; no more of thy most shrewish and ill-starred face. From thy land may none but go-betweens⁴ come forth, and from thy kin may none but sorcerers be born. If from thy family a thousand children come forth, may they all be whores, witches, and followers of deceit. May God let none of them believe, so that their daughters may be given to a nurse to rear, to be suckled at bad and foul breasts; so that the pure race and honourable child may be blotted with dishonour, and their children be spoiled. If even a child of the sun sucks thy breast, to expect light from him is a mistake. May God punish my mother, for my pure race has been blemished by thy nurture, and she has given me into the shameless hands of a sorceress like thee, who hast neither reason nor shame. Thou art mine enemy—not my nurse. Now certainly thou hast lost thine own, and thou wouldest deprive me of the

¹ *Azizi*—excellent.

² *Daabams*.

³ *Cupri*.

⁴ *Madchacali*, 121.

grace of my face.¹ May God cover me with His shield, and deliver me from impurity like thine. Thou art not one who is praised for always caring for and honouring thyself. Now, for this diabolical conversation and thy shamelessness
 96 | all thy name is dispersed, and the plague of thy love is rooted out from my heart. Henceforth none will honour thee, save those who like thyself are whores and witches. Thy converse and death seem equal to me.

“PARABLE (*Araci*) : Thou teachest me this : that since I shall fall² like a leaf from a tree in autumn, why should I not rejoice in whoring in my short days ? May my life be one of grace, and denied to wantonness. Paradise and the sight of God befall not one who thus behaves. Fate and sportiveness³ seem alike to the wise ; sportiveness never rejoices long.

“Thou, O nurse, wrestle not with thy soul, for I shall not hearken to thy converse, and never shall I be taken in thy fate.⁴ I am not a little child⁵ that I should be deceived by variegated⁶ things, or a bird that I should be brought down⁷ with stones. The message I have received from the stupid Ramin is an idle tale in my ear. If thou shouldst ever again announce to me and convey to me the desires of the devil, it would seem that I am not of my family, and that this discourse of thine would please me. I am become weary of this world, and have set reason as a sentinel over my soul. Every man knows this, that God and the faith are better than a Khuzistan devil and Ramin.”

When the nurse saw Vis’s wrath, and heard her talk of God and the faith, she thought in her heart : “Now some-
 97 what | sweetly will I begin talk and converse.” Thus she said to herself : “I cannot seduce this girl, and I cannot overcome her stout-heartedness. Now my resource is

¹ *Piris tsqali*, 78, 123=Persian *ab ru*=water of the face.

² *Chavidchrebi*, 75, 106. R., 1188. ³ *Laghoba*, 128. R., 1471.

⁴ Var., “net.”

⁵ *Qma*, 84, 126.

⁶ *Dchreli*, 111. R., 121, 161, 1465, plausible. ? bright coloured.

⁷ *Davgorde* (?).

witchcraft, surely I shall be able to do something by incantation." The nurse again began the conversation, she used her peerlessness of tongue and spoke thus :

" O most beloved of my soul and fairest of all the fair ! Thou art always a speaker of right and a doer of right, and always modest and honourable. What would move me to deceive one of such race and purity as thou art ? Why should I speak to thee as a mediator¹ for another ? I am not some feeble and needy person. Ramin is not my son, nor my kin, nor is he allied to me by marriage,² nor my master. I am not under his orders ; what would it profit me to make him my friend and thee mine enemy ? I wish thy wish in this world, whatever pleases thee pleases me too. Now I will trumpet³ forth to thee a secret,⁴ since I have not the power to speak it. However much thou mayest have of wealth, still thou art a child of Adam, not an angel, nor a *Kadj*, nor a *devi*. Thou hast been torn from such a peerless husband as Viro. Thou hast married such a monarch as Moabad. None has found joy in thee hitherto, for thou hast been united to none in bed, neither hast thou rejoiced in any, nor dost thou know anything.⁵

" PARABLE (*Araci*) : Thou hast wedded two husbands, and art cut off from both. Thou and a bridge over a great stream⁶ are alike.

| " If thou didst at all understand lying by the side of 98 men, thou couldst not find in this world one like Ramin. What avails it if thou art fair as the sun and thy fruit is not eaten up ? Thou dost not know this, that for a lover this world is not pleasant without a friend. By God the female bird even has been made for the male. Art thou not female, fitting a male ? A man weds a wife for this, that they may rejoice in each other. If they take not pleasure in each other, besides worldly goods, what have they ? Now, if thou knowest that I speak truth, then this cursing and insulting of me is groundless. I say this

¹ *Ilat'hi*, 176.

² *Mzakhabi*, 145, R.

³ *Buci*, 200. R., 46, 168, etc.

⁴ *Khuashiadi*, 25.

⁵ *Niv'thi*, 207.

⁶ Var., "over two streams."

because I love thee. I am thy mother and nurse. Ramin is thy peer, and thou his ; he loves thee, and thou shouldst love him ; thou art a sun, and he a peerless youth.¹ Do not sacrifice each other in love. When I see you two as one, there will be nothing in the world to trouble me."

When the nurse had spoken and said all this, the devil himself helped her to seduce Vis, he made his legions set a thousand nets ; the nurse dug a thousand pitfalls in Vis's road. Thus she spoke :

"Behold the wives of monarchs and grandees, they all make merry, each has a lover in secret, each rejoices openly and in secret, whilst thou continually weeppest and complainest of Fate. Suddenly age will overtake thee, and thou shalt remain without thy share of the joy of youth. Thou art neither stone nor iron, how canst thou bear such grief ?"

When Vis heard this discourse from the nurse, from the great energy of the nurse love boiled up, melted her stony-heartedness ; | every member was bound in a net save her tongue, and her tongue kept her secret. Then with pleasant words she thus addressed the nurse :

"Aha ! thou sayest truly that women are born for men. Whatever thou sayest, all thou sayest is true, and it is not patchwork thou sewest together (*i.e.*, it is all consistent). Women, however feeble and cowardly² they are, are yet the ravishers of the heart and strength of lion-like heroes. A thousand ills come from love of women ; it is better that no one should fall into love with them. I say what I have said because wrath early pursues women as a habit. These thy words just spoken struck my heart like the point of a poisoned arrow ; I sulked for this, because I heard words to make me heavy, my tongue was wayward with evil speech, and I heartily repent it. It behoved me not to behave badly to thee ; if I had had patience, it would have been more praiseworthy. If I listened to the words of none and gave no answer, that would be ill enough. Now I beseech

¹ *Moqme*, 85.

² *Djabanni*, 107.

God with entreaty to keep me in peace and to preserve my tongue from evil speaking ; as long as I live may the preservation of my purity rejoice my friends and grieve my enemies ; and may the God of Shahro preserve me from an evil wisher like thee and from such an inviter to deeds of misfortune."

THE NURSE PARTS FROM VIS AND SEES RAMIN FOR THE
THIRD TIME

WHEN the sun rose next morning the nurse went to the place where Ramin awaited Vis's answer. The nurse was exceeding sad, and spoke thus :

“ Why dost thou trouble thyself in vain ? How long wilt thou seek water in fire ? The wind cannot be enthralled¹ nor the sea dried up with one hand, nor can Vis's stony heart be softened so that one may lie at her side in bed. From a hard rock² love makes water to flow, but not from her. In love even a mountain is better. If one cries out to a rock, it gives a man a reply ; but she, unfeeling, gives no reply, says nothing. She is like a scorpion. I have delivered thy message, she gave me no answer for thee. But she insulted me greatly. And at this in her do I marvel still more, that neither by witchcraft, nor incantation, nor cunning,³ can anything be done. My seductions have no more effect⁴ on her than physicking a drunken man. As water is not wounded by a stone, so my efforts and incantations touch her not.”

101 | When the disheartened Ramin heard these words, like a wounded partridge in the claws of a falcon, he became helpless, the world was darkened and hope was cut off ; death was near, and mischance seemed like a cloud ; there was dew in his eyes and lightning in his heart.* From hopelessness his heart became shrunken, the point of a

¹ *Shepqroba*. Cf. *sheupgra*, R., 277.

² *Tinisa cldisagan*, 208. R., 404, 731.

³ Var., “ sovereignty,” “ mastery.” ⁴ *Gava*, 103. R., 14, 118, etc.

thousand arrows pierced his heart, with a loud voice he cried and shouted :

"O nurse ! By the Most High, I adjure thee by the Most High ! But once more give me thine aid. I have none on earth save thee. We hang upon thy bosom and neck ; I and my joy are devoted to thee by oath. If I have no hope from thee, even now my life will be drained to the dregs. I can endure no longer. I shall become quite mad ; I shall make known the secret of my heart ; I shall remain in the land a byword and a reproach. If but once again thou wilt try, wilt pity me, and will let that sun know of my unhappiness, as long as I live my life¹ is thine as a gift. I shall never forget thy service.² Meseems her hard heart will soften towards me and become merciful, and cause the candle of love to be lighted. Surely she will repent of her obduracy, of her anger against thee the other day ; she will not make to flow the blood which is guiltless towards her, and not bereave me of my soul, generously devoted to the increase of her days.³ Yield her much homage from me, and say thus : 'O hope of the aged and the young ! Thou hast my heart for melting, like wax ; and it befits thee to possess it, for thou knowest how to keep⁴ a heart. Thou art sovereign over my head and body, and such sovereignty befits and beseems thee. And if thou once shovest me thy heart, I shall spend my days in thy | service. Of a truth thou knowest that I 1102 shall render thee service if thou findest me worthy, and acceptest me as thy slave. Once thou wilt love me with love, then shalt thou learn how pleasant is love. Though thou hadst a hundred thousand lovers, thou couldst not find among them one so devoted as I am to thee. Thou art the sun, and if thou shinest on me from love, I shall become as a jacinth.⁵ Do not desire me not to serve thee, let my love not seem a reproach to thee ; save me from everlasting

¹ *Sulni*, 224. R., 487. ² *Sheni monoba*, "that I am thy slave."

³ *Mist'ha dedat'hal'huis* has been amended to *mist'ha dghet'hal'huis* in the translation.

⁴ *Shenakhva*. ⁵ Var., "I shall be turned from saffron to jacinth."

woe and unhappiness ; make me live that I may spend my days in thy service and at thy will. If thou desirest me to give up the ghost, what can be easier ? And if thou dost not show me mercy, I am even now become powerless. I cannot endure thy wrath. I will cast myself from a great rock or into a great stream, that I may free myself from being. In yonder world it is thou that shalt be asked concerning my fault,¹ and it shall be exacted from thee, for I have spoken to that God, the Creator and Judge of all, and Him have I appointed my witness."

After this discourse he lost consciousness through excess of weeping, he entreated the nurse, and the nurse yet again had pity on him. She went to Vis, for her heart was still more pained for Ramin. She went and sat down with boiling heart, she calmed herself, and in her heart prepared a speech concerning Ramin's affair. Thus she spoke :

" O sovereign of all beauties ! For thy sake die alike those who are near and those who are afar off. I have 103 a | secret from thee, and my tongue is bound from shame of thee. I fear also Shah Moabad, for from the wicked everything is to be feared. I protect myself from shame and reproach lest ill should befall me. I fear hell, too, lest I should burn guilty in it ; but what can I do ? When I think on Ramin's affair, and his face sometimes yellowed and sometimes reddened, ever bathed in tears, for his sake the eye of my conscience is continually closed and my heart is inflamed. He has adjured me by such an oath that fear has forsaken me, and the world is become hateful to me for pity of him. I pity him so much that I would not grudge my life to help him. I have seen many a wretched lover, with fire in his heart and tears of blood in his eyes, but I have never seen lover wretched after his pattern.² His moan alone consumes a thousand lovers. His words cut me, and his ever-tearful eyes. My endurance is cut off by his sword, and by the flowing of his tears my house is overthrown. I very much fear even that he may

¹ For suicide *cf.* R., 728, 768, 815, 854, 945, 1169, 1278a, 1279.

² *Aracad*, 143.

suddenly die, and God will exact of me punishment for his faults. Thy pitilessness towards him is not profitable. Do not so, my light; take pity on his powerless plight: soil not thy skirt with his blood. What harm will it do thee not to suffer his days to be consumed by these griefs? What does it matter to thee¹ whether thou fleest from him or not, since he is for thee. God neither will create, nor has He created, another like him. He has made him in every way faultlessly fair, for | he is thy peer, else peer- 104 less. God has guarded thee a virgin under His protection, that He might give thy person to Ramin; be he and thou our sovereigns, and let him remove thy seal. It can only be done by him, for he will be thy lord,² and thou shalt taste for him a wife's love, and you shall rejoice in each other."

As the nurse spoke and sware thus, Vis was convinced³ in her heart, and loved Ramin in her heart. She began to pity him and abandoned enmity. Love appeared, and smoke was added to her fire. The time of Ramin's joy was come, and the sharp tongue was blunted for replying. Her silence was a sign of her belief in the nurse's discourse, and she sought means not to have it perceived. She looked round about for shame, her complexion⁴ turned many colours,⁵ sometimes yellow, sometimes red; as from a spring, tears and sweat flowed. She was seized with fear of blame.

PARABLE (Araci): The heart of the lover draws the heart from the body, as the loadstone⁶ draws iron. A one-sided love can no more be cherished than an ass can be loaded with a one-sided burden.

The sorceress nurse perceived that the arrow had hit the mark, she had caught the fleet wild ass in a net, by witchcraft and incantation she had fettered the wind.

Ggava, 100, 188.

² *Ukhutzesi*, 94—senior, seigneur. ³ *Idasturebda*.

Haeri, 128 (cf. Lexicon in N. Marr's *Gregory of Khandz'tha*), radiance as well as air. R., 988.

⁵ Lit., "the air of her face turned in many ways."

⁶ *Maghniti-kua*—magnet-stone.

VIS SEES RAMIN IN MOABAD'S THRONE-ROOM AND BECOMES
ENAMOURED OF HIM

As Ramin's luck would have it, Shah Moabad gave orders that courts should be held. He called Ramin, and all the grandees and nobles were seated together to drink and make merry. Minstrels¹ sang; the court was filled like heaven with sun, moon, and stars. There was great merriment.

Among Moabad's generals² Ramin appeared like the moon among the stars. Of set purpose he was adorned extravagantly. Musk and camphor mixed with roses added to his beauty. By continual thought and grief his heart was become like his waist in thinness, and Fate embittered him. At the drinking, feasting, and jollity, sitting with the singing damsels,¹ he seemed like one drowned in water. He was drunk with both love and wine. From wine his face was like a wild poppy, from love his heart was asleep. The thought of Vis was seated in his brain, and her face did not fade from his eyes. Vis herself was led thither by the nurse, she made her look secretly through the window at the drunken grandees and at Ramin. The nurse thus addressed Vis:

106 | "O light of mine eyes! Look if there be any lovelier than Ramin among the warriors? Tell me, by thy sun, is he not gracious and perfect? Does not Ramin's face very much resemble Viro's? Is it not by God's grace that Shah Moabad's court is illumined by him? Does it not behove

¹ *Mutribt'ha*, 23, 164. R., 356, 470.

² *Amirspasalart'ha*, 163. R., 40.

thee to love one so peerless, and that you should rejoice together?"

The more Vis gazed on Ramin the more her love increased. When she had well examined Ramin, she completely forgot her love for Viro. She spoke thus in her heart: "Aha! Happy is she to whom falls such a husband! By what mischance is it that it has befallen me to see him, since he has thus made me wholly forget Viro? Now, since I am cut off from brother and mother, why should I always burn? what avails it? Why have I so long sat alone? How long shall I suffer grief? I am not iron. I cannot find a better lover than this. It is better that I should fulfil his desire."

She thought somewhat thus in her heart, and regretted those days which had passed in vain. She did not show her love, although she was maddened with love, and fire consumed her. Thus she spoke:

"So that is Ramin; as thou saidst, he is certainly fair and gracious. His noble birth is evident, and he does resemble my brother Viro. But what he seeks, as thou knowest, he cannot find. Although my face may be a sun, it does not shine on him. Neither shall I become like him and bring trouble to myself, nor fill myself with shame nor fall¹ into woe. God will give him somebody else instead of me, and he will forget my name and love."

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When Vis came down from the window² and went into her palace, her eyes no longer saw on account of her love for Ramin, and she had no wits left in her; her colour paled, and she could not keep her heart in one place. A mighty demon was come to do battle with her, he fixed his claw in her heart, and with the same claw took away colour from her face, power from her body, and patience from her heart. Vis was indeed a coward,³ and when such an event happened, her heart failed her, no colour remained. Sometimes she used reason, she chose endurance and honour. When she had thought well, she put the fear of God in her heart; when her humour had chosen honour, she warded

¹ *Chavidchrebi*, 96, 115, 192. R., *chavidcher*, 1188.

² *Saremeli*.

³ *Djabani*, 99, 189. R., 1019.

herself against shame and began to repent of love. She preferred purity and godliness to love. She fixed her heart, so that it could not be turned by any device, and would not lay her head on an unbefitting pillow; neither would she want Ramin, nor lay down her modesty for him.

The nurse knew not this, that the heart of Vis had turned and hated love.

THE NURSE GOES TO RAMIN

JOYOUSLY went the nurse and spoke thus to Ramin :

“ Methinks the end of thy grief is come : the prudent Vis is a little gentler, she has put away sulkiness¹ and is pacified. The tree of thy sorrow will bear joy as its fruit.”

Ramin rejoiced like a man half dead when he has become assured of life ; from exceeding joy the tears sprang forth. He made obeisance to the nurse and kissed the ground before her, and spoke thus :

“ O wisest of all the wise, my thanks for this cannot be imagined, for thou hast sought out the means to deliver me from the fear of death. If I gave thee my soul in return for thy pains, that even would not suffice. But may God repay thee in Paradise. Thou art my saviour, and honourable.² I shall spare not myself for thy sake, and I shall not desist from this by reason of anything thou mayst say ; I shall not grudge my body and head in thy service.”

When he had thus given great thanks, he placed before her ten thousand *drahcanis*³ and also a royal coffer full of gems | and pearls, two hundred goodly⁴ rings of gold and 109 many musk-bags⁵ and camphor. The nurse took none of these things from Ramin. She said :

“ O my joy, I love thee more than wealth. I have inexhaustible possessions. Thou art the light of mine eyes,

¹ *Cushtoba*, 65, 110. R., 757, 1464. ² Var., “lady” or “mistress.”

³ *Drahcani*, 87. R., 456, 992.

⁴ *T'hualadi*, 156. R., 1055.

⁵ *Upe*, 171—navel. Song of Songs, vii. 2.

the sight of thee is my jewel and pearl ; I desire thee, not gold."

She took one ring from Ramin as a token,¹ but she kept nought else.

The nurse went to Vis and found her sad,² the ground moist with tears. She began to complain : " How long will this last ? Or what is thy trouble now ? " She was again wrathful at the nurse, and began to discourse of the fear of God and eternity. She said :

" I have thought on divine things, I do not want Ramin, nor any one. Why should I do an evil deed since the doing of it would at once slay and disgrace me ? What reply should I give to my kinsfolk in this world ? or in eternity, when God questions me, what excuse can I make ? Shall I say that for the sake of one whim I have disgraced a thousand kinsfolk ? If Ramin is pleasant and lovable, Paradise and God's grace are still more pleasant. If Ramin should upbraid me, it matters not to me ;³ God will be merciful to me. If for Ramin's present love I am hereafter punished in hell, Ramin's love will not come nigh me (there). I have never done the ill deed, and I will not do it, not even if for me the light of day is made dark as night."

110 | When the nurse heard these words, she began after her wont to talk slyly (like a fox), and said :

" O resource and light of thy mother, thou hast no capital⁴ save obduracy.

" PARABLE (*Araci*) : Thou canst never stick to one word, thou turnest like a millstone ; the earth does not turn, and Fate and thou whirl like dice⁵ at the game of backgammon.⁶ Thou changest colour quickly like a turquoise, and like iron thou soon rustest.

" Thou canst never evade God's decree, nor struggle against the planets and Fate. If thou canst not put off this obduracy, none can bear to be with thee. May God

¹ *Iadgari*.

² *Daghredjili*, 19. R., 848.

³ *Ara mgama*, 122, 188. R., 1312.

⁴ *Sathavno*, 86.

⁵ *Camat'helni*; *mocamat'he*, R., 661.

⁶ *Nardi*, R., 82, 320.

make happy to thee the land of Marav and Shah Moabad, but may God grant me to be in her land and with Shahro. Here in Marav I have none save thee, and thou thyself knowest that not even a *deri* could bear to be beside thee now. Thou treatest me without honour; like an enemy, thou continually insultest me and behavest ill to me. I will go to thy mother, I shall dwell pleasantly, and I shall gaze on thee in thy gloom¹ no more. Thou knowest, thy God knows, and whoever thou pleasest knows, that I have had too much of thy converse and intimacy."

Vis said :

" O nurse, why dost thou so love Ramin ? A stranger has given thee orders, and on his account² thou art become weary of me. How can thy heart speak to thee of separation from me, of going away and dwelling pleasantly elsewhere ? What can I do without thee, alas ! I have thee here | instead of a mother. Woe is me ! how black and 111 wretched is my fate ! And how topsy-turvy are my affairs ! I am cut off from mother and home and sundered from brother and kin ! Thou alone more than all wast my hope and in this loneliness the scatterer of my grief, and now even thou art become weary of me and hast become the friend of them that seek my blood. Now thou also forsakes me and castest thy name into the water, whereof thou wilt repent. Thou wilt seek a balm for this grief and wilt not find it."

The nurse made answer and spoke thus :

" Thou art the sun of beauties, and beauty will of a surety not lead thee astray. God's decree has been set upon thy head. What avails it to use so many useless words ? Put away thy fickleness³ and coquetry⁴ and tell me, when wilt thou see Ramin, when wilt thou be friendly to him, when wilt thou deliver him from his woes ? Monotonously thou hast prolonged idle talk ; 'tis time to make an end of this and to unite his eloquence and thy briskness.⁵ The pleasant-

¹ *Sicushte*, 108, 126.

² *Gzil'ha*, 61.

³ *Sidchrele*, 96, 208.

⁴ *Lamazoba*. Cf. *lamasad*, 115.

⁵ *Djomardoba*. ? agility, 115.

ness of thy youth is asleep; awaken it, let the valour¹ of high birth appear, fructify the branch of joy, take up thy share of sovereignty and youth, let thy days be spent in joy and repay² love. Fear God also. Such disobedience to the supreme will³ cannot be. By birth thou art neither a Kadj⁴ nor an angel. Thou art one of us, of earth, always desiring thy will and pleasure and always caught in the 112 net of pleasure. God created human beings | in such a way that woman and man cannot love anything more than each other, and if thou knewst the force of this thou wouldest no longer threaten me so much; and I swear to thee that this my saying, when the end of this matter comes, will not be proved false by thee."

Vis answered the nurse as follows :

"The beauty of Paradise is more pleasant than that which thou offerest to me. If I were delivered from thee and thy sorcery, it would be exceeding easy for me to forsake man. Thine insistence makes thinking hard for me; were it not for this it would be easy for me to suffer the lack of Ramin. If I were not afraid to trouble thee, he would meet many sorrows in his love for me. Though thy Ramin had been a falcon he could not have reached me, and if he had been the wind he could not have found my dust. Now have a care of this that will be, that this our secret be not made known. Thou thyself knowest how great a sovereign is Moabad, how heavy is his wrath in the hour of his anger; when he looks on guilt he is keen as a sword, relentless⁵ and inflexible as a lion. If he once discover our affair, certainly he will slaughter us all together, and until the day of discovery we hold our lives on sufferance."

¹ *Catzoba*—virility, 115.

² *Umukp'hen*, 111, 121. R., 487, 1167, 1445.

³ *Uzenaoba* (?)

⁴ 75, 213. R., 190, etc.

⁵ *Uzenaro*, 207, 210.

THE UNION OF RAMIN AND VIS

WHEN a good and prosperous year comes, in the spring-time even it is evident, so Vis and Ramin's affair was successful in its beginning. When Vis looked with love on Ramin, and the smith¹ of Fate wiped off from her heart the rust of enmity, although she had seen much grief and heartache in love, they rejoiced exceedingly together. That same week they were united, for the wind blows nowhere without (God's) will.

Shah Moabad removed from Khuarasan and turned his face, with his camp and guards,² towards Khuarasan (? Gurgan); from Gurgan he went to Koistan, and from Koistan he went to Re, and tarried a time. In his lands he busied himself with affairs of state and hunted. Ramin remained in Khuarasan, in Marav, on the pretext that he was sick. His brother entrusted to him his place, throne, and land, and bade him be just and subservient. The Shahinshah went away from the city of Marav, and Vis, Ramin, and the nurse remained in Marav.

On the first day the sun-faced Vis sat at her ease, rosy and fragrant in the lofty queen's court, which was from top to bottom painted in gold. There were in that court three doors, one leading into the great palace, one into the garden, and one to the lower road. Vis sat like the sun on the throne, from prettiness and joy | she tasted great self-satisfaction. From head to foot she was decked in jewels and pearls, and by Vis's beauty every fair one was made hideous. A hundred thousand roses bloomed on her face,

¹ Zeincali.

² Nobat'hea (120), caravsa.

and thirty-two strung pearls shimmered in her mouth. Whoever perceived Vis's fragrance, the corpse became quick, the wounded whole. In the garden bloomed roses like her face, and the scent of musk was wafted forth, and the smoke of the sweet savour of Vis's conversation rested like a cloud in the air; so to speak, she censed amber¹ and aloe.²

The sun-like wives and daughters of the grandees sat before her, but in her presence they were not perceived; and they sprinkled down rose-water. Her court-room was like Paradise. The nurse sometimes adorned Vis like Paradise, sometimes the room. When the assembly separated, and they sat alone,³ the nurse led Ramin by the upper way⁴ to Moabad's bedchamber. As if he did not see that room nor perceive Vis, the ravisher of his heart, nor had fulfilled his long-standing desire, so he became senseless from joy, and could not assure his heart that this had happened to him. At his union the water of immortality rained on him. When Ramin sat at the side of that sun, the illuminer of the earth, forthwith from his heart fire and smoke were extinguished. The cheeks of both bloomed with joy, and thus he spoke:

“O source⁵ of all joy, thou art gifted by God with every 115 perfection, thou art above all queens in birth, and | the instructress of all enchantresses in the affairs of love. Thou art a rose, thou smellest of camphor and musk, amber-haired, moon-faced, and cypress-formed. Thou art the sun of beauties, and blessed is he on whom thou shinest.

“PARABLE (*Araci*): In radiance thou art a shining moon, but a destroyer⁶ of the lover's heart. Fate has given thee such light that thou wilt wipe the rust from unhappy Fate.”

When Vis heard this discourse, from bashfulness, gently and delicately⁷ she gave a tender reply, and spoke thus:

¹ *Ambari*, 49, 140, 197.

² *Alva*, 78, 148.

³ *Khalvat'had* (137)—privily. R., 661, 990, 1200.

⁴ *Graf*, “Über das Dach.”

⁵ *Dasabamo*.

⁶ *Damanelebeli* from *daneleba*, to destroy, ruin.

⁷ *Lamazad* (?)—coquettishly. Cf. *lamazoba*, 111, 149.

"O happy, brave youth,¹ I have seen, indeed, very great griefs from Fate, but, in truth, I have not seen a grief like this—that my disgrace is made easy to me. My pure race and body are blotted, I have sacrificed conscience and modesty, but this ill deed has befallen me from two causes: by my always unhappy fate, and then by my nurse. She has cast me into shame by her witchcraft and conjuration. She used upon me all her power, her example, judgment, entreaty, and prayer. But now I ask this: Wilt thou cause mine enemies to rejoice over me, and, like the rose, be but a short time in love; or wilt thou stake thy manhood,² and art thou lasting like the jacinth? If thou repentest not this deed, upon which thou art entering, for as many years as we live, and art not fickle, I will even do this sin; and, if not, urge me not to the grief and shame which will follow this deed."

"PARABLE (*Araci*): For the sake of finding one moment's gratification do not fall³ into eternal shame and disgrace. The finding of gratification unto a thousand years is not worth one shame, for the rust of it to all eternity will stick to a man. That desire which is but of a day should not 116 be allowed to enter even into the mind."

Anew Ramin began a eulogy:⁴

"And then this country! I know no country like Mah, in which a sun like thee was nurtured; I have never seen a mother like Shahro, who bore a son like Viro and a daughter like thee. With a thousand blessings from God be blessed for ever thy race and thy parents, whence came forth the like of thee! Blessed be thy mother, thy father, and thy brother; blessed be thy handmaidens and servants; blessed be he that gazes on thy face, or who hears thy name; blessed be thy nurse, and blessed be he who is thy lover and friend! To Marav this fame will suffice for ever that it is the abode of a sun like thee; this will suffice for

¹ *Djomardo* (cf. *djomardoba*, 111), ? agile, adroit.

² *Catsoba*, 111, 201.

³ *Chaidchrebi*, 106, 179.

⁴ *Kebu*, 71, 182; (*kebuli*), 145. R., 5 et passim.

the glory and fame of Moabad that in his harem¹ he had one like thee! As grace from God, this joy will suffice me as long as I live. I am glorified in union with a sun like thee; and since with these eyes I have seen thy face, and with these ears I have heard thy speech, henceforth, except this glory, I shall hearken to nothing good; henceforth I shall see nothing save my desire and joy."

Then Ramin swore with a binding² oath, by the power and glory of the all-creating God, by the brightness of the sun and moon, by all that is above the sky, by the heaven and the earth, by the law³ of God, and by all oaths—that as long as he lived, as long as the wind should blow upon the mountains, and water and fish should be found in the seas, 117 as long as dark night | had blackness, or a star was found in the heavens, and man's soul in his body should love—Ramin would not repent of his love for Vis, nor break his oath, nor take delight in any other face save hers, nor desire any save her, nor look on any with eyes of love, nor do anything against Vis's will.

When Ramin had thus sworn and assured her, then Vis, too, swore equally strongly² that in her life she would not be false to Ramin, and she would not be lacking in love. She gave a bunch of violets into Ramin's hands and spoke thus:

"Receive this from me as a token: wherever thou seest a fresh violet, think on this day and oath. Thou wilt be thus blue, and wilt thus hang thy head if thou breakest thine oath to me. I will take a rose as a token. Whenever in the garden I shall see a rose, I shall remember this day and oath. May I be short-lived as a rose when I break this mine oath and deny God."

When they had thus sworn each to the other, they appointed the Creator as their witness.

Then they lay down together, they spoke to each other of grief past and of joy. In the pleasures of love Vis lay on her side like the chief among all sovereigns, and Ramin,

¹ *Sadedo*, 58, 182, 216.

² *Mtcitzi*, 161. R., 757, 1148.

³ *Sdjulit'ha*, R., 1148.

like the sun and moon, embraced her neck. If angels had seen, surely they would not have perceived which was fairer, nor whether one or two lay there! Their couch was filled with roses and jewels. In the lists¹ of pleasure the ball² was thrown down, and so tightly grasped were they intertwined that if even a heavy rain had fallen on them | it 118 would not have bedewed their breasts, and mouth was set upon mouth. Ramin's heart had long been wounded; much hurt had Ramin seen from love; he benefited greatly in the joy of Vis, for every arrow of love which had struck Ramin he kissed her more than a thousand times for each. When they had entered the lists of joy, and fulfilled their desire, and freely³ had bored the precious jewel, and honour had forsaken the honourable—he knew that just as she had been born of her mother, he had had her with that same seal. Then he loved her all the more because she had not been possessed by her husband. When both had fulfilled their heart's desire, they became still more mad for each other, and love increased. Thus were they together for two months. Every day they were together; at night forsooth they made merry together.

Then Shah Moabad heard that his brother Ramin had regained his health. He rejoiced, and forthwith wrote a letter to Ramin, saying: "Without thee I cannot be merry, nor pleasant in heart, nor do tourneys and drinking please me. Now come soon, we will hunt and rejoice a long time together. The earth is verdant, flowers of many a thousand hues have arisen from the earth, the mountains have sewn themselves coats⁴ of Greek cloth of gold⁵ and have doffed the ermine⁶ caps from their heads; so many streams have sprung forth by reason of the water that a greyhound⁷ cannot catch a goat without a boat. When thou readest this letter come quickly, and bring also

¹ *Moedani*.

² *Bur'thi*, 198, 200. R., 20, 63.

³ *Madjnad*, 60. ? gratis; ? had by boring rendered the jewel of no account.

⁴ *Caba*, 70, 187.

⁵ *Okeino*, 12. R., 820, 1859.

⁶ *Qarqumi*, 171. R., 123.

⁷ *Avaza*, 75, 120. R., 459, 1187.

quickly Vis the flower of spring, for she greatly desires to see her mother."

When Moabad's letter came to Ramin, he immediately began to prepare and set out. He took Vis also with him. All the road was very bad and difficult, yet to the two lovers 119 journeying together it seemed like Paradise. | When they came to that land, Moabad and his armies met them. Immediately they led Vis to her mother. Vis was very much ashamed at the face of her brother. All rejoiced so greatly at her coming as befitted Vis. But for her, joy was turned to heaviness, because she was parted from Ramin, and scarcely saw him once a week; either she saw him in Shah Moabad's presence or on the road, and such seeing seemed nothing to her, and gave her no comfort. Much seeking to see him cast her into grief, and love so seduced her that she could not wait even a moment for Ramin, and preferred him even to her soul.

CHAPTER XXIII

MOABAD LEARNS OF THE LOVE OF RAMIN AND VIS

RAMIN tarried a month with Moabad, and they made merry together in drinking and hunting. Then they proposed to go to Mughan,¹ on the seashore, to hunt. On the night of that day when Shah Moabad removed, he lay at Vis's side. Moabad so loved her that he could not sleep² with her at his side. This grieved him that she, fair as the sun, lay at his side, and he could not | rejoice even once in her, 120 because he was bewitched.

The nurse came secretly ; she thought Moabad slept, and said to Vis :

"How canst thou sleep at such a time when thou thinkest on the departure of thy lover Ramin ? He proposes to go to-morrow towards Armenia to hunt ; there it may happen that there will be war with the enemy and fighting, and it may deprive thee of thy heart and joy. Now the drum³ has assembled all his army, his tent stands outside, and early to-morrow he will remove (his camp). Now even they beat (the drum) for departure, and the soldiers begin to stream out. If thou desirest to see his face, fairer than the sun, go early up the tower⁴ and look forth. Sleep cannot be if thou think on his absence. He is going away to hunt, but with hawks and greyhounds⁵ thy heart holds him captive. When he goes away early, and takes with him thy heart and my patience, look on him."

¹ The steppe of Mughan, on the Caspian.

² For *kue*, 125. R., 1021, 1091, 1217, 1219.

³ *Nobat'hi*, 118. ? = *nobil'h*, *dap'h*^h*dap'h*^h*il'h*.

⁴ *Coshei*, 15, 125, 128. R., 502. ⁵ *Avasa*, 118, 134.

As their ill-luck would have it, Moabad was awake; he heard all this their discourse, and listened to the words of the nurse. Moabad leaped up infuriated, his face became like ashes; he could no longer, from excess of wrath, understand what to do. He sat like an intoxicated war-elephant. He began to abuse the nurse and curse her; he said :

“ Oh filthy, disgusting, denier of God, source of all whoring and devilry, more shameful and dirty even than a dog !”

121 | He commanded his servants :

“ Take away this hateful one, that I may slay her like a miserable hound, and that I may thus repay¹ her for her wenching. On Khuzistan, whence came forth such a whore and pander,² stones should shower instead of rain ! They deceive their betters and behave treacherously to their sovereigns. From Khuzistan no pure one comes forth, all are (ill) examples and heathens. Woe to him who trusts one of that land, or who gives his child to be reared there ! For that Shahro brought a nurse from there, she thereby filled her court with shame. A nurse from Khuzistan and a blind (man as) sentinel³ are equal. He who takes a raven as his guide, his lodging will be the graveyard.”⁴

Thus he vented his wrath on the nurse, and then spoke to Vis as follows :

“ Vis, thou denier of God and partner of the devil ! Thou hast neither conscience nor modesty nor righteousness nor desire for honour. Thy kindred are disgraced by thy shame; thou hast forsaken modesty and become weary of it; thou hast despised the faith. Thou art degraded in the eyes of all thy folk and before me. What thou hast done will not please Shahro, nor Viro, nor any of thy kindred. All of them have been shamed by thee. So long as thy nurse has served thee, of a truth the devil was thy

¹ *Mukap'ha*, 111, 153.

² *Madchacali*, 95.

³ *Gushagi*, 142. R., 1367.

⁴ ? A Georgian proverb. Note the rhyme.

guide. When the priest plays the *ordzali* (a two-stringed instrument), what can the deacon do but dance?"¹

Immediately he sent a man to Viro, he summoned him and complained of his sister, he narrated everything in detail, and said: "How has this thy sister been brought up?"² What is fitting and right that I will I put on her as a 122 punishment. Have no pity on the nurse, even unto death. If I should requite her, I myself should suffer exceeding heart pain. I shall burn out Vis's eyes; I shall, of course, kill the nurse; I shall chase Ramin out of this land, and as long as I live I shall not mention him. I shall rid the land of three wretches."

Although Vis was (by nature) modest, the deed of love had reft her of shame. Now behold what reply she gave to Shah Moabad before her brother; how love had deprived her of patience, fear, and reserve; how passion made her devote herself to death; how she gave up the world and youth for its sake. Like an asp,³ she rose in wrath from her couch before Moabad, clasped⁴ her hands over her breast, and said:

"O mighty and exalted⁵ sovereign! Thou canst by no means terrify us by thy wrath and threat of punishment. What thou sayest is all true and well, and thou dost better that thou hidest not our shame. Now, if thou wishest, strangle me or burn out mine eyes; if thou wilt, drive me out; if thou wilt, let me remain fettered for ever. If thou wilt, make me walk naked among the troops; do to me whatsoever thou wishest, everything is in thy power. I cannot gainsay this: I prefer Ramin before everything in heaven and earth; I will exchange my head and soul for his need; he is the light of mine eyes and the joy of my heart; he is the loving and precious ravisher of my heart, the giver of patience to me. And what boots it to me⁶ if I sacrifice one soul for his sake! Though I had ten thousand

¹ This is evidently the addition of a Georgian translator or copyist. *Ordzali*, 68, 208.

² *Tsuarl'ha*, 60.

³ *Aspiti*, 192. R., 1209.

⁴ *Moidchudna*.

⁵ *Maghali*, 24, 181.

⁶ *Ramgama*, 109.

souls, I should desire them all for him. I shall not cut off Ramin's love until my life is cut off. I shall not put away from my mind his sunlike face upon his cypress-like form.

123 | I prefer him to a thousand monarchs, and to see him seems better to me than a thousand monarchs and Maravs. I see the sun and moon in him, he is my hope and desire. I love Ramin more than Shahro; I desire Ramin more than Viro. If thou wilt, slay me; if thou wilt, drown me. I shall not hate Ramin, nor shall I ever forget him. Thou and Viro both are my lords; whatever you will you can do to me. If Viro slay or fetter me, I shall be pleased; I shall bear it and be content. If thy sword remove my soul, it matters not to me, for my name will remain for ever—how Vis sacrificed her soul for Ramin. I would sell a thousand souls for such fame! But, as long as the lion lives, who dares to slay his cubs and disturb¹ his den? As long as Ramin lives and has me, none dares to look on me with crooked² eyes. When I have in my hands as big a sea as I could wish, to fear the fire is despicable. Thou wilt be able to cut me off from my Ramin, when from thee it is possible to breed men. I have no expectation of such a thing, and in this matter see what thy power can do."

When Viro heard Vis speak thus, he desired his death a thousand times. He went away and took her with him. He spoke to her alone, he admonished her. Thus he spoke:

"O enemy of God, mad, stupid! How can such discourse be from thee, or what hast thou done to Shah Moabad before me? Thou hast taken away the water of my face³ and thine own also. Why hast thou not shame before me and Moabad, that thou sayest thus: | 'I want Ramin, and I want not Moabad!' Why dost thou not tell me this, what thing thou seest in Ramin that thou shouldst prefer him before all. In his treasury, what has he save a harp and string? What knows he more than this—to tune the harp, to thrum upon it, and to make harmonies? He is

¹ *Ashla*, R.

² *Mrudi*, sinister, 176.

³ *I.e.*, "Thou hast disgraced me." Persian, *ab ru*, 95.

always shouting like a brawler in drunken revelry. His clothes are constantly given in pledge to the wine-grower, the Jews are his comrades,¹ prodigals are his boon companions. I know not where thou didst learn to know him, and wherefore thou hast thus become enamoured of him. Think now of modesty and the fear of God, and do not in this anything whereby thou mayst cause us to be filled with shame. A mother like Shahro, and a brother like me, will not suffer ourselves to be shamed and disgraced by thine evil deeds. Follow not always the wish of the devil, and cast not away this world and eternity for Ramin. Though Ramin seem to thee like immortality, consider that God's Paradise is more pleasant. I speak what is better for thee. Now know thou, by thy God and by thy husband, if thou listenest not to what I say, I have no resource but to cast thee off."

As Viro spoke, Vis wept pitifully, and said :

" All that thou sayest is true. But what should it avail me to shut the door? All that I had, the robber has taken away. My soul has not fallen into the fire in such a way that advice from any would have availed it. My heart is not broken by love in such a manner that a skilful man may know how to bind it up. I have given my heart to him after such a fashion that no part of it remains to me any longer. God's decree was fulfilled on me. What was to be, was! Now talk and regret avail us not. | I love Ramin, 125 so that I can never be cut off from him to all eternity. If thou askest me: ' Dost thou prefer Paradise or Ramin ? ' by thy sun, I prefer Ramin. For the sight of him seems Paradise to me."

When Viro heard this rash discourse from Vis, he no longer cast his pearls before a sow;² he went out and left her there.³ He committed the affair of Moabad and Vis into the hands of God.

Then the Shahinshah went forth to sport, and played in the lists. They were divided into bands on either side: Moabad and twenty chosen men on this side, and Viro

¹ *Arip'hi*, 68. R., 1148.

² *Graf*, "Perlen in den Staub."

³ *Kue*, 119, 184.

with chosen men on that side. Ramin was on Moabad's side.

They began the game, so that it could not be better and more fair to look on. So to say, the ball mounted to heaven. That day among all most to be praised were Viro and Ramin. Sometimes the one excelled, sometimes the other. Vis looked forth from a tower¹ at such praiseworthy ball-players. Ramin and Viro pleased her most. From much grief of mind she became melancholy, the colour faded from her face, she wept and trembled like one who has ague. The nurse sat by her side, and pleasantly spoke thus :

“ Why has the devil prevailed over thee, so that thou strivest to exhaust thy soul and to empty thine eyes with weeping? What dost thou? Hadst thou not Qaran as father and Shahro as mother? Is not Viro thy brother and Moabad thy husband? And thou, Vis, art thou not the sun, the queen of all beauties? Art thou not queen of

126 Aran² and Eraq?³ | Art thou not queen and lady⁴ of Thurket'h⁵ and Khuarasan? Art thou not renowned in race and worth⁶ and mistress⁷ of all sovereigns? If a thousand griefs afflict thee, hast thou not such a lover that when thou seest his face every woe will be dissipated? Planet, sea, and dry land desire a sovereign like thee. Thou complainest to God the Creator, He has given thee even here His Paradise. What, indeed, canst thou entreat from Him more or better? Thou art a great and dread⁸ sovereign, thou art young⁹ and fair; in this world thou hast ease¹⁰ and peace; in seeking aught more than this, know that thou angerest God. Do not so, O moon! Trust in thy fate and what God has given thee. Thou hast sulked¹¹ enough. Do not anger the monarch, and do not irritate thy

¹ *Coshci*, 120.

² Var., Eran, 85.

³ Eraq, 94.

⁴ *Khat'huni*, R., 1049-1050.

⁵ T'hurkethi, 85.

⁶ *Sicet'he*, 5. R., 82.

⁷ *Sapatrono*, 71, 144, 198. Cf. *sabatono*, 137.

⁸ *Sacrdzalavi*, R., 394, 971. ⁹ *Qma*, 96, 129. R., 83 note.

¹⁰ *Nebieri*, 88, 143.

¹¹ *Sicushte*, 110, 129.

brother; for when drop by drop thy sin accumulates, there will be a great flood from it.”¹

The (sweet) tongued moon thus answered:

“O nurse! How long wilt thou speak evil and despicable words? How long wilt thou seek water in fire?

“PARABLE (*Araci*): Hast thou not heard from wise men that the battle is not grievous to onlookers?

“I am a footman, and thou art a horseman; thy steed is swift and the field is flat. Thou knowest not my woe and weariness. I am sick, and thou art whole; thou knowest not what spot hurts me. The sovereign is my lord and husband, but he is suspicious, dangerous, and ill-natured. Though Viro is my brother, I now hate him. To my eye he is like another’s gold; and though he be the moon itself, he is of no use to me, for he is not mine. As for Ramin, ¹²⁷ he is an idle flatterer. Thou thyself knowest that his tongue does nought but deceive. A flattering tongue and a lasting love go not together. His tongue in the hour of converse is sugar, but afterwards gall, and he is full of knavery.² I, alas! am put to shame; having a thousand affairs, I am idle, and having a thousand lovers and friends, am loverless. I have brother, husband, and lover, and through these three I burn on fire. My name will remain to me only from my wedded state, from my state of love only reproach will remain to me. I esteem not as magnificent the golden bowl³ in which my enemy has poured out my blood. If I had been fortunate, none save Viro had been my husband. I should not have seen Ramin’s face nor Moabad’s, who resemble lovers, but are hateful foes. One is like a plague, always torturing the soul, and the other for me is like stone with glass; the heart of one is immovable,⁴ like a stone, and the heart of the other is a seeker of unrighteousness.”

¹ Rhyme in the Georgian.

² *Bidchobit’ha*, 82, 184; *bidchi*—a boy, or knave.

³ *Tashti*.

⁴ *Daudgmeli* (?).

MOABAD TAKES AWAY VIS AND COMES TO MARAV AND
KHUARASAN

IN the Pehlevi¹ tongue Khuarasan signifies pleasant and fertile land. The food for Eraq and all Persia comes from (Persia and)² Khuarasan. The earth and water are pleasant and the air³ is pure, and the city of Marav itself, in Khuarasan, is as pleasant as May among the months; it is a place for men to take rest in, and is like Paradise.

When Shah Moabad, under a good planet, having returned from Koistan, went to the city of Marav, he sat on the towers⁴ like Solomon and Balav⁵ and sported; thence he gazed on fields, gardens, and vineyards verdant and blooming. Smilingly and sportively⁶ he said to Vis:

“Behold the fields and vineyards are fair like thy face. The water, the earth, the garden, the hayfields, meads and orchards, mount and vale at Marav are decked by God like Eden. Why dost thou not tell me, O my moon, whether Marav pleases thee more or the land of Mah? I prefer the land of Marav for this, that its land resembles heaven adorned with stars. So to speak, it is Paradise, full of God’s bounty. As Marav is more pleasant than the land 129 of Mah, so am I more than Viro. | I have many lands like

¹ *P’halauri*, 3.

² ? the insertion of “Persia and” a copyist’s mistake.

³ *Haeri*, 104, 224.

⁴ *Coshci*, 120.

⁵ The editors of the printed text suggest the god Baal; perhaps Balavari is meant (the Georgian story of Buddha); but Graf reads “Balkis,” which seems better. ? read Balac.

⁶ *Laghobit’ha*, 96, 135. R., 59, 79, 82, 136, 889.

the land of Mah, and also many excellent¹ youths² like Viro."

See what sort of an ungracious reply Vis made. Through love she was enraged like a lion, and like an ass she was no longer evenly balanced.³ She said :

" O monarch, whether Marav and the land of Mah be pleasant or no, God make thee happy ! I am imprisoned here much against my will ; like game I am caught in a net. If it had not been for seeing Ramin, even now thou wouldest have heard my name among those of the dead. But when I see him, Mah and Marav seem equal to me. If my heart had not burned for him, I had not lived till now. I am such a gardener, planter of the rose, that I entreat the thorn for the sake of the rose. I entreat thee on Ramin's behalf, for he holds my heart in pledge."⁴

When the Shahinshah heard this hard answer, his face reddened with wrath ; then he became yellow, his heart was pierced by an arrow, and he trembled with anger. He was so angry that he wished to slay. But love and reason took the upper hand again. When he became angry, reason opposed itself ; and when he was furious, the decree of God poured water on the fire of his wrath.⁵ Since he understood that his life was from God, how could a man slay in his enmity ? No man whom God protects is overcome by his enemies. He will deliver him from the claws of the lion and the trunk⁶ of the elephant. How many times he remains uninjured by accident ! Vis was like wealth hidden in a ruin, | bound for all men, and only 130 loosed for Ramin.

When he had raged furious for a long time, Shah Moabad's reason prevailed, and he did no evil deed to Vis, but began to insult her, saying :

¹ *Zemdgomi*, ? overseer.

² *Qma*, 128, 138. ? slaves ; ? vassals.

³ Play upon words : " Her mind was as unbalanced as an ass with unequally distributed burdens on his two sides."

⁴ An obscure passage. Ch. Dict., s.v., reads *nakhut'havi* (" he has my heart in his power ").

⁵ *Sicushc*, 128.

⁶ *Khortumi*.

"O begotten of a dog, reared by a witch¹ and sorceress, may the loins of Shahro who bore thee be blasted! May the house of Viro also be laid waste so that, save unbelievers and bywords² none may come forth from thy race! The serpent's brood forsooth will be serpents, and the fruit of an evil tree will be bitter. Adrabad, P'harakhzad, Viprond, Abanoz, Vis and Shirin,³ you are all begotten by the same father, born of whores and reared by witches. Thou alone hast blackened the race of Djimshed, and thou hast shamed the race of Djimshed.⁴ Now thou hast three ways before thee, choose which thou wilt: one to Gurgan, one to Devemand,⁵ and the third to Iaman⁶ and Niavand.⁷ Now, get thee gone by which road thou wilt! Be thy guides the deceiver⁸ and *devs*,⁹ and thy resting-places ruinous and waterless. Mayst thou meet pitfalls everywhere on the road; may the plains be full of serpents and the mountains of snow; may the water be poisonous¹⁰ and the fruit of the fields uneatable; by day mayst thou meet the lion and by night the deceiver;⁸ mayst thou come upon a mighty stream and a broken bridge. May God be wroth with thee, so that none of His creatures may endure grief like thine!"

When Vis heard this command, shameless in her beauty,
131 she made exceeding merry at Moabad's words; she bloomed like a rose, she did him homage, and went out.

¹ *Bebli.*

² *Magalit'hi*—example, 134.

³ Abanozn and Shirin, 6.

⁴ Djimshed, 140.

⁵ Graf, "Demawend."

⁶ 12. "Iamaneli," 32. Georgian var., "Amian" (*cf.* 140). Graf, "Hamadan."

⁷ Graf, "Nahawend."

⁸ *Matzduri*. ? the devil. Graf, "Währwolf."

⁹ *Devi*, 65.

¹⁰ *Samsaliani*, 86, 177. R., 1005.

CHAPTER XXV

VIS'S PARTING FROM MOABAD

SHE said to her nurse :

" Go, nurse, tell the glad news to Shahro, and make Viro also glad. Take gifts and say thus to him : ' Thy beloved sister is come, thy love, thy brilliant sun has risen, whence thou didst not expect it; a sign of hope has appeared to thee whence thou hadst no suspicion of it. Even now fate has put away loneliness from thee.' Say : ' Two suns have come forth from Khuarasan for thee,' and cause my mother to rejoice, and say to her : ' The sun is delivered¹ from the dragon,² her happy fate has waked, and the precious jewel of her race is wending hither.' Since God has delivered us from Moabad, say I am delivered from all griefs."

Then she went to Mobad³ and said :

" Exalted⁴ monarch, be always merry, and live so that those who love thee may rejoice ! May God put away thine enemies from thee ! As long as I live and have my being I shall pray heartily for thee. Forthwith wed such a wife as may be fitting to you, and may she have a hundred | handmaidens such as I am. Wed one so fair and beau- 132 tiful that whoever of thine enemies sees her may become oppressed and blinded with envy ; may she be of exceeding high birth, praised⁵ for purity and honour, like the sun desired of all eyes, and like a spirit beloved of all. Without thee may I live joyous, and without me may God grant thee glory and increase thee. May He do so that it befall

¹ *Daekhsna*, 82 (*sheekhsna*).

² *Veshapi*, 81, 151. R., 1136, 1176, 1208, 1896—eclipse.

³ Thus spelt in the text.

⁴ *Maghali*, 122, 143.

⁵ *Kebuli*—eulogized (*keba*, 116, 145).

not either of us to repent, and may our desires be fulfilled that we may never remember each other."

She counted the keys of the treasuries into the hand of Moabad, and said :

" Commit them into the care of another treasurer who in thy harem¹ may be fairer and more faithful than I. May God not make me miss anything for lack of thee nor make thee sad for lack of me."²

Thus she spoke, she did him homage, and went forth. And Vis freed and let go all the slaves and handmaidens she had bought.

When Vis went forth, Moabad's court became confused and darkened without her. From every corner came the voice of weeping. The women of Shah Moabad's family became sad and wept for her going away. They kissed one another and separated. The eyes of many wept for her, and the heart of many burned at her departure; but Ramin, of course, was unsuspected by all. When the departure of Vis was decided, he became unconscious from grief, like a bird with its head cut off he fluttered. When he returned to consciousness he did not rest one moment

133 | from grief, from soreness of heart, and from shedding tears unceasingly.

He fell ill again—now it was harder than his first falling in love. Though tears did not help him, yet he had them as a resource. Sometimes he cried out for his love, sometimes he wept for his heart. Day and night he communed with his heart and could not close his eyes. He spoke thus : " O heart become helpless! Thou hast blackened my body and soul, thou hast blackened with the brand³ of love the bright day, thou hast turned my joy to grief, my laughter to tears, my health to sickness, and hast bowed⁴ my arrow-like form. Now behold the bitterness of love, if it lives without the loved one. Without her I could not

¹ *Sadedo*, 116, 216.

² *Graf*, " May you have as little cause to miss me as I have to miss you."

³ *Daghi*, 150. ? *dagheba*, 52.

⁴ *Mshvildad*—made like a bow.

bear to exist a moment. Now, alas! how can it be to be without her? Henceforth shalt thou see great grief, henceforth thou shalt eat much gall without her. Think, O heart, on the bitterness of loneliness, accustom thyself even now to the bearing of grief, for that suddenly thy beloved has been taken from thee, for that thou canst not look upon Vis! O my darkened fate, luckless, why hast thou left me consortless and loverless? O treacherous Fate, by thee am I brought into this anger; thou didst give me joy, and thou hast become jealous, and hast departed unfeelingly. O Fate, if thy deed is not treachery, like a little child, whenever thou givest, why dost thou thus inconsiderately take away from me?"¹ In this way Ramin communed piteously with his heart and wept. His heart was removed from joy and his head from repose. Much he thought by what means he might be saved from the sadness of solitude, or what net and contrivance he might set for his purpose.

Then he sent a man to Shah Moabad, saying: "It is six | months since I have been lying down² and have been 134 ill; now a little sign of strength and health has been given to me. For a long time I have not sat on a horse, I have not donned my armour, my horses are become wild, my greyhounds³ and dogs are spoiled by being tied up,² my hawks are maimed, I am weary of staying here and lying.² Grant me leave⁴ to go to Amul, Gurgan, and Kharav.⁵ I will go and hunt and pass the time; then I will set out from the hunting-grounds and come before thee again."

When they announced to Shah Moabad this his brother's message, he perceived the knavery⁶ and cunning⁷ in that discourse, and that he could no longer suffer separation from Vis nor remain at home. He began to insult Ramin and to curse him, and spoke thus:

¹ R. (?).

² *Kue*, 125, 145.

³ *Avaza*, 120, 159. *Graf*, "Jagdpanther."

⁴ *P'harmani*, 81. R., 627, 1494.

⁵ *Graf*, "Gurgan und Sari." *Kharav*, cf. *Khorav*, 218.

⁶ *Bidchoba*, 127.

⁷ *Magalit'hoba*, 180, 150.

“ Mayst thou have no future¹ and life ; may God take thee away, but may He not bring thee back in peace ; mayst thou not have health and victory. Whither thou desirest, go ! Thou sacrificest thy soul for Vis’s enchantments, and when thou seest her with thine eye may she die before thine eyes ! May this thy evil disposition die with her, and the fruit of this ill seed make hell fall to thy lot ! Again,² all my words will be bitter to thee, but all is due to thy trickery.³ In love I advise thee : if thou hearkenest and hast reason, wed a good wife of the race of Koistan,⁴ a child of man, a fair one. Touch no more Vis and the nurse, otherwise some time thou shalt surely suffer hurt at their hands. Rejoice by the side of thy wife, put thy trust in her. If thou doest not this, see what will come upon thee ! I will light a fire upon swords and spears, and therein I will cast thee and Vis together. If I am shamed by my brother, 135 I prefer | death to his life. Think not my word a jest !⁵ An angry lion is by no means playful.”⁶

When Ramin heard this commandment, he cursed his brother in his heart and swore on their book of oaths⁷ by Moabad’s sun that in his life he would not go to the land of Mah, nor remove a step from his commands, nor see the face of Vis, nor sit down with her kin and rejoice. Then he spoke thus :

“ Thou art not such a sovereign that I dare do treachery towards thee, and if I am disobedient to what thou hast said, may my head be cut off. I fear you like God, and as I hearken to His command so do I to yours.”

By word of mouth thus sweetly he announced this answer, and his heart filled with blood ; but his intention⁸ was otherwise, and he hastened to set out and see Vis.

¹ *Tsaghmart’hi*, 76.

² *Djeret’h.*

³ *Khuandji.*

⁴ *Graf*, “ *Gebirgsland*,” 136.

⁵ *Laghoba*, 128, 174.

⁶ *Amkhanageba*, R., 79.

⁷ *Sap’hitzi*, R., 402.

⁸ *Calabad.*

RAMIN GOES TO VIS

WHEN Ramin had passed the gates of the city and set forth, he became whole, as aforetime he had no sorrow. When the wind blew from Koistan¹ it seemed to him as if it wafted a perfume of Paradise. He travelled quickly, as is the wont of lovers. The length of the road grieved him not, for he was to see his lover, and the badness of the roads was not hard to him. The journey seemed sport to him, in spite of the great trouble he saw.

Now, when Vis had come to her mother's, she was ill-humoured and gloomy for lack of Ramin. Her longed-for land of Mah seemed to her a pit. For lack of him she loosed altogether her raiment,² she sat like a mourner, she neither ate nor drank; she did not laugh, and, save desire for Ramin, she had no other thought. She was as if she were not in her own home, and avoided the sight of her mother as if she had been a snake. When she saw her brother, he was like an avenger of blood to her. She took no pleasure on earth, she replied joyfully to the words of none, she did not laugh. By day she gazed on the sun in place of Ramin, and by night she took pleasure in the darkness in place of the blackness of Ramin's hair. Day and night she sat on the roof, her eyes turned towards the Khuarasan road, and longed that the wind should blow from Khuarasan and bring the sweet scent of Ramin. | By 137 night she said: "Ah! perchance Ramin will come in the morning," and in the morning she said: "Ah! he will

¹ Graf, "Gebirgsland," 184.

² *Samcauli er'l' hobil'h cide sheekhana*, 82, 206.

come in the evening." Thus she spoke: " would that I saw him sitting wearied on his horse, that he might have his face towards me and his back to Marav! Why cannot I see him coming towards me like a hero¹ from the realm² of Rostom?" Day and night she felt desire and grief; her eyes were ever on the road.

She sat one day on the housetops at the hour of sunrise, and for her two suns rose: the sun illumined the earth, and from Khuarasan Ramin (illumined) Vis's heart. He came thus for her comfort, like a physician easing the sickness of one diseased; he was one who could turn back the eyes and spirits of Vis which were about to run out from her. When she saw him, joyously she hurried down, and they embraced each other like wild vines. Both wept for joy and gave God thanks. Saddened by absence from each other, they bloomed like roses at their meeting. Together they betook themselves to a private³ room. Vis said to Ramin :

"Thy heart has found its desire, and the fish its stream. This is the royal chamber, be seated; rejoice greatly, as it likes thee. Thou didst set out for the chase from Khuarasan, and full easily hast thou met thy prey. I am thy pheasant and thy partridge eke; thy wild goat and thy hind. Sit down pleasantly, rejoice in game like me; eat and drink, sport and sing, as befits thee. To-day let me and thee be full merry, let us think not of the morrow. | Let us do according to our will, for we have suffered for each other; we are lovers, young,⁴ and we have achieved our desire."

They embraced and kissed one another, then they lay down and day and night rejoiced as they desired. Seven months they tarried thus, and winter came, the cold from the mountains. Both the young⁴ royal lovers were in the oak-grove.⁵ They had lordship, beauty, love, joy. Thus they had bliss without alloy,⁶ for who has joy lacks nothing.

¹ *Dchabucad*, 85, 142. R., 580, 1015, 1036.

² *Sabatono* (cf. *sapatrano*, 126). ³ *Khalvat'hi*, 114, 165.

⁴ *Qma*, 129, 150, 174.

⁵ *Mukhaeri*. ? name of a place.

⁶ *Uclebad*—without lack.

CHAPTER XXVII

MOABAD LEARNS THAT RAMIN HAS GONE TO VIS

WHEN Shah Moabad heard this news, that Ramin had shown ill-breeding, that he had gone and was again staying with Vis, and that the broken love was tied up again—

PARABLE (*Araci*) : Ramin's heart will be sated with Vis when the devil is sated with ill-doing. When a hare plays the lion, then Ramin's heart will be cloyed with Vis. When a sparrow becomes a hawk, then Ramin will forsake his evil ways—

| immediately Moabad went to his mother and com- 139 plained of what Ramin had done. Sadly he said :

“ Could a sane man do as Ramin has done ? Who that possesses reason could be pleased with Ramin's deed ? He has gone away to Vis my wife, and my royalty and name are shamed. How can two brothers go with one woman on the earth ? What can be worse than this ? I hid this shame and secret from thee hitherto, and now I needs must make it known to thee, that thou mayst know what has come to pass, and mayst not curse me unjustly. I will slay Ramin in such a way that thine eyes will weep like a spring cloud. My head will be delivered from this shame when I bathe my face in Ramin's blood. Thou art my heaven and my hell. This ill repute of mine cannot be pleasing to thee either.”

His mother answered :

“ A wise man never cuts off his own arms and legs. Slay him not, he is thy brother, and there will remain to thee no other brother like unto him. When thou art without Ramin thou shalt be heirless. Thou shalt find no pleasure in life

and joy without him. When thy beloved brother no longer sits by thy side in the wassail, when thou hast not him to support thee in the day of battle, thou wilt have no friend at thy side, and none at thy back to overawe thy foe. God has given thee no son to rule thy land in days to come. When God's decree—the end of life to every human being—comes upon thee, thy house and throne will fall to thy 140 foes. | Spare him, that he may live and keep thy place after thee."

"*Shegoneba*: A man cannot live for ever, but sometimes he forestalls death.

"It is better to have Ramin alive, that he may be a conqueror of the earth and a monarch like thee. Slay not thy brother; cast off thy wife, and commit the key of love to someone else. There are many fair, sun-like ones, whose breasts are pure silver, and whose hair is amber.¹ Choose one of these, give her thy heart, and commit to her care the key of the treasury. Surely from her oyster shell² will come forth a precious gem, for she shall give thee joy, and thy place will be preserved. What dost thou expect from thy connection with Vis? What virtue³ has she save that she is of Djimshed's⁴ race? Though in birth she is royal and worthy, to her beauty a thousand evil ways pertain. Do not this, O monarch; use reason, and soil not thy soul with Ramin's blood. Thou canst find a thousand women like Vis. Why dost thou not chase from thy heart love for this harlot? I, too, have heard this story, and methinks I have heard even worse of her loathsome licence. She loves also her brother Viro again, day and night he sits carousing by her side, and he is more drunken with Vis's luck than with wine. He desired this always; now that it has come to pass he sorrows no more. Why art thou enraged against the unlucky Ramin? It is Viro who has sinned against thee, not Ramin. He is in Amian,⁵ this is because he is like

¹ *Ambari*, 114, 194.

² *Sadap'hi*, 153—mother-o'-pearl. R., 836.

³ *Cargi*, 141.

⁴ Djimshed, 130.

⁵ *Hamian*, 13, 130. *Graf*, "Hamadan."

thee, a lover of Vis. One trait of the harlot Vis is this: that each day should have its own leman. What is the use of such charm and beauty | when she tarries not one month 141 with a lover? She is like a rose: though it is fragrant and pleasing, it stays not a long time, but soon departs."

When his mother had ended her discourse, and Moabad had heard it from his mother, he straightway became well disposed towards his brother. But he waxed so angry with Vis and Viro that his face grew yellow with rage. At once he wrote a letter to Viro, and in wrath he sharpened his pen like a sword. He wrote: "Why dost thou not tell me why thou desiredst superiority over me? Who is thy backer or thy helper that thou art become so exalted? Why dost thou not tell me this: who has put so much courage into thee that thou hast doffed the nature of a fox for that of a lion? Why wilt thou lion it with lions? Where didst thou overcome a wild ass, or where didst thou put a lion to flight? Though Vis is my wife and thine, and thou hast treated me thus, why does she sit by thy side? When hast thou ever seen one woman the wife of two husbands? I have never seen two war elephants bound with a single hair. Can it be that thou hast conquered some countries there, or have very mighty allies¹ joined thee, and therefore thou hast taken heart? I have never seen any virtues² in thee; never has any sovereign fled from thee, nor hast thou led away any enemy as captive; never hast thou laid waste the land of any who oppressed thee. If thou hast ever done any good, I have heard of it from none. Thy race in the day of glory hangs its head; it is like the mule in breed: when they ask about its father, it speaks of its mother. Thine archery is of the best, but it is at the target³ and not in battle. As a horseman thou art good, | but thou 142 galloppest better in the square in the lists than in the hour of battle and conflict. As long as thou art near women thou provest thyself a hero⁴ indeed, but in the day of battle

Asabiani, 142.

² *Cargni*, 140, 218.

³ Var., "in the campaign" (*sagrobasa* for *sagnobasa*). Cf. *sasagno*, 204.

⁴ *Dchabucoba*, 187, 145.

and the hour of strife thou fleest like a wench. Thou always playest the lion in the land of Mah, elsewhere even a fox cowes thee. Surely thou hast forgotten thy fear of me, for I shall take the soul from thee; and canst thou have forgotten even the trace of the blows of my destroying hosts, for even now in the land of Mah on all sides is heard sighing and mourning. I have still the same strong arm and sword as before to wipe my foes from the face of the earth. When thou readest this letter, await me shortly. One of these days before breakfast my sword will be thy guest. I have heard, too, how thou didst boast formerly and vaunt thyself before thy retinue. Thus thou didst speak: 'Moabad fell upon me unawares, and so carried off Vis from Gorab. I was careless;¹ if I had happened to be there, Moabad would by no means have carried away Vis.' Now thou art no longer unwitting¹ like a drunken man; thou sittest in thy place, a mighty² sovereign. Thou knowest what I am doing, I am set out to do battle with thee. Set sentinels³ at all the posts,³ strengthen all places, assemble the armies, summon thine allies,⁴ and prepare thyself as it seems good. I myself will soon overtake thee, I will scatter thy treasures, I will make thee and thine armies my booty.⁵ I shall not fight thee so that thou shalt anywhere remain alive, to hide thyself, after thy wont. I will shed so much blood in the land that the stream of blood will carry away the corpses. I will carry off Vis in dishonour, and unveiled I will make her run afoot through the army. I will act in such a way, and bring such shame 143 on thee, that henceforth none | will ever dare to oppose his superior."

He gave this letter to a messenger,⁶ and sent him to Viro. Immediately he made the matter known to all his hosts, and magnates and soldiers prepared their battle array. He assembled them, more numerous than the sand of the sea.

¹ *Ghap'hali*, 201. R., 685, 712, 1530.

² *Mordchmuli*, 88, 195, 215. R., 32.

³ *Gushagi*, 121, 191. R., 1367.

⁴ *Asabiani*, 141.

⁵ *Iavar*, 75, 213. R., 1081, 1152.

⁶ *Shicrici*—courier, running footman.

They beat alarums¹; so to speak, the river Djeon² flowed towards Koistan. The dawn was hidden by the multitude of the hosts. They were heroes, like blood-drinking lions. They went swiftly after the letter-carrier, like winds.

When P'haranda³ presented the letter, in fear of Moabad's wrath, strength forsook (Viro's) body and light his eyes. He said :

"I wonder what such anger means, or such threatening speech towards me. Vis is his wife, and sat in his court. On a winter's day he drove her from his house. He beats us, and it is he who laments. We have suffered two unjust deeds from him. My choice sister, like a bloody foe, he has driven out with a thousand dishonours; in no letter since has he remembered her or called her back. He has sinned against us, and now he is angry with us. The Shahinshah is neither stone nor brass. Why should he make so many threats and vaunts? Once he collected his army and saw me; I ween my person liked him well! He went hence fleeing, and shamed in such a way that he remained in the lands a byword⁴ for dishonour. Our war was not hidden that I need remind anyone of it now. With difficulty he hid himself then. Now, why should he plume⁵ himself again: he feared two men with one broken bow."

Then he wrote a suitable⁶ reply to the letter: "Great sovereign, exalted⁷ and warlike, autocrat⁸ From thy mistake, | what can come upon thee save sorrow and evil? 144 Thy words have not been spared, O king of kings.

"PARABLE (*Araci*): It is fitting that thou shouldest be mild and wise in every deed.

" Since thou art the master,⁹ it befits thee never to speak

¹ *Asaqari*, 200—relating to a campaign.

² *Gihon*, 66, 187. R., 781.

³ *P'haranda* (12, 145), according to the lexicon at the end of the printed text, may be—(1) a proper name, (2) a stork, (3) a messenger. Ch. Dict. gives only "crane." The word occurs again in the penultimate paragraph of this chapter.

⁴ *Aracad*—fable, 103.

⁵ *P'hereba*, R., 13, 765, 1229, 1874.

⁶ *Piriani*.

⁷ *Maghali*, 181, 170.

⁸ *Nebiero*, 126, 171.

⁹ *Patroni*, 126, 198.

an idle word. The wise should speak justly, and glorify themselves continually by righteousness. Between us enmity is unbecoming, for friendship and enmity cannot exist together. You speak shameful things, and insult us ; we cannot insult thee thus. Thou hast chased away thine own wife, thou canst blame no one else. On account of this, there is no need for thee either to write letters or do battle. Behold thy wife, take her whithersoever thou wilt, and if thou command me, I will even now send Vis to thee. Since she has come here, God knows I have not seen her more than three times ; and even if I saw her, what wonder is it ? When was ever brother hindered from seeing his sister ? What matters it to thee if thy wife sits at my side ? and if thou suspectest me of evil, know that never have I done unrighteousness. Vis says the same, and thou also knowest that I have spoken this guilelessly. Now, after this, if thou knowest not the truth about me, I will make thee hear. In that letter which thou hast written to me thou art come as a judge alone, and certainly thou sayest most evilly unjust things. Thou hast praised thyself in the former combat, saying : 'I was victorious and thou didst flee.' Thus thou saidst : 'It is the same arm and steel sword.' Neither is mine of straw. If thy sword cuts chain armour and helmets,¹ mine cuts stone and anvil.² Thus thou sayest : 'Hast thou forgotten thy fear of me ?' Thou, 145 if thou sawest | in a dream the trace of my blows, awakening would be no pain to thee. Whatever is necessary to say in my praise³ and in disgust of thee, thou hast said and written all in my place. If thou readest this letter to the soldiers, many a hidden shame will be revealed to thee. Thus thou didst insult me : 'Thy mother in race excelled thy father.' A brave⁴ man's race in the day of battle is his sword and bravery.⁵ Then they seek not for birth, but for spear, sword, mace.⁶ Let them fear that in battle I

¹ *Djadchu* (188)—*muzaradi*, 187. R., *djadchvi*, 426, 1346 ; *muzaradi*, 430, 1375, 1389.

² *Gurdemli*, 198. R., 5.

⁴ *Mamatzi*, 185.

⁶ *Lakhti*, 29—scourge. R., 108

³ *Keba*, 116, 132, 164.

⁵ *Dchabucoba*, 142.

shall show my race when we meet; and I shall do deeds, and not only speak with my tongue. Golden race and sharpness of tongue are worth but a groat¹ when heroes are combating together. Put away² such discourse and now use heroism.³ To-day our helpers are our arms, swords, and hearts, and the victory is in God's hands."⁴

Viro sent out the messenger⁵ (Pharanda). He went to Shah Moabad. When Moabad was reading so hard an answer, he began to read slowly there where he suspected that Viro had given an ill answer for the sake of Vis, and when he had read the whole letter, wrath and error immediately turned to repentance. He sent another man to Viro to say: "We are delivered by thee from all grief. Very evilly hast thou heard from me, and I knew not that (my accusations) were unjust. Now I am dismounted from the dark (chestnut) steed⁶ of enmity, and am mounted on the (dappled) grey steed⁷ of love. I am thy guest for one month. As beseems friends and kinsfolk⁸ so care for our entertainment. I shall be thy guest | in thy court and royal 146 garden, then for a year I shall be thy host. Murmur not at me at all in this affair. Come hither forthwith, and bring Vis with thee. Vis is my soul, and thou art my chosen brother, and Shahro is my mother."

When Moabad's loving letter came to Viro, and many salutations and presents for Shahro, again the demon of enmity was hidden, and the rose of love blossomed forth; the eye of gladness was awakened, and enmity fled away. They led the sun-like queen Vis and committed her to Moabad. Every man rejoiced. So to say, then was the wedding. For one month they rejoiced there, they hunted, they tilted, they drank, then they set out for Khuarasan, and came from Mah to the city of Marav.

¹ *Dangi*.

² *Kue*, 184, 175.

³ *Dchabucoba*, 142.

⁴ R., 883.

⁵ *Pharanda*, 143.

⁶ *Rakhei*—? black, ? chestnut.

⁷ *Dcharmagi*, 20. R., 1831, ? white. Graf, "Rothfuchs der Feindschaft . . . Grauschimmel der Liebe."

⁸ *Mzakhali*, 97—related by marriage, father or mother of son- or daughter-in-law; *vemzakhle*, 214.

CHAPTER XXVIII

MOABAD LIGHTS A FIRE FOR VIS TO SWEAR BY

WHEN the Shahinshah came to the city of Marav he rejoiced in heart, and in Vis's presence his sun was Vis's face and his musk Vis's hair.

One day he sat pleasantly, merry in heart, by Vis's side, 147 and spoke of Ramin's love, how she had tarried such a long time in the land of Mah, and perhaps Ramin had been at her side. If he had not been there to dissipate her dulness she could not have borne to tarry there from morning till night.

Vis sulkily answered :

“ Suspect me not of such evil and baseness. Sometimes thou sayest thus to me : ‘ Thou hast had Viro,’ and makest the sight of him bitter to me; sometimes thou sayest thus : ‘ Thou hast had Ramin.’ Why dost thou insult me so much ?

“ *Araci (PARABLE):* Think not hell so hot as people say, nor a *devi* so hideous as people think. Though they say that a thief's trade is (only) thieving, they think very falsely.

“ Thou thyself knowest that Viro is a sportsman, and tarries not indoors a moment. He knows no other occupation but playing at ball, hunting and drinking with the nobility. The same habits afflict Ramin as Viro, and he is very fond of him. For these six months they have enjoyed sport like two brothers. A young¹ man loves a young man better than an old man, for the greatest pleasure is youth. A man's beauty and youth have been

¹ *Qma*, 138, 150.

created by God like Paradise. When Ramin came to the land of Mah, he and my brother rejoiced in the chase, in ball-playing and carouses.¹ It cannot be that all who love somebody are sinful and worthy of slaughter, nor do all who are lovers deserve that treachery and deceit to friends should be imputed to them. Every heart is not treacherous like thine, nor is every man stubborn² like thee."

| Shah Moabad marvelled, and said :

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"An it be thus it is well. Ramin is blessed, no longer to be cursed. Now swear to me that thou hadst not Ramin there. Why dost thou fear? Innocent, by an oath declare thy righteousness. God punisheth not the innocent. The mouth that hath not eaten will not stink of satiety."

When Vis heard this from Moabad, she boldly spoke thus :

"O dread sovereign! Thou canst not terrify me with such an oath, since the truthful easily swear. When one's heart is righteous, an oath and the drinking of water are alike."

The Shahinshah said :

"There is nought better than this, that thou shouldst swear to me; it will save from suspicion and reproach, and will bind the tongue of every one who slanders thee. Now will I light a great fire, I will make smoke of aloes³ and musk; swear to me this by fire before all the nobles and soldiers, pass through the midst of it, so that at the moment when thou swearest to me thou mayest become pure in soul from sin. After this, none will dare to reproach thee nor speak an unpleasing word. Then thou shalt be my soul and world,⁴ I shall love thee like my life, I shall at once give thee my royalty and show forth thy purity."

Vis replied :

"Do so Thou shalt purify, and I too shall be purified by this. As long as thou suspectest in thy heart that

¹ *Gagebil'ha*—? in organizing. (See lexicon to text.)

² *Sheupovari*, 88. ? froward.

³ *Alva*, 114, 206.

⁴ *Satsut'hro*, also fate, 158. R., 63, 302, 322, 324, 330.

I am not pure, thou harmest thy soul and all religion. It is better to see sin and hide it than not to see it and accuse."

149 | Then Shahinshah called together all the servants of fire, his nobles, and armies, and sacrificed in the pyre¹ great possessions, so that of each it is impossible to tell (singly): gold, jewels, pearls, villages. Thence they caused a little fire to be taken. In the *moedan* they lighted with it a great mountain of fire, so that its heat reached unto heaven, and its flame was like a fair woman in a linen² smock, walking delicately.³ The greatness of the fire lighted up the whole land, and it was consumed by the heat, as a lover is consumed by separation, and its smoke darkened the air of heaven. And none knew for what reason Shahinshah had lighted such a fire, and it mounted so high that its flame warmed the moon.

There stood together before the fire the magnates of Khuarasan. Vis saw that fearful fire from Moabad's tower, and said to Ramin :

"Behold the deed of that man, what a great fire he has lighted for us, and would burn us in it! Now, before he burn us, come, let us both steal hence. We shall cause Mobad's⁴ heart to burn through this same fire of his. Moabad said to me yesterday: 'Swear that thou hast not had Ramin.' And I began to talk, and cheated him. Now they have lighted here a great fire before the townsfolk and soldiers, and he will make me walk in this fire; he will bring me to shame before these men, and thus he said to me: 'Thou shalt go in naked before these men, that none may slander thee with Ramin.'"

Then she said to the nurse:

"What sayest thou, how shall I be saved from this fire ?

150 | This is no longer a time for bravery, now it is a case for flight. Thou art a great contriver of means, and prudent; tell us what is our resource, or how we can escape from this ? At such a time craft is better than courage."

¹ *Satzetzkhele*. Graf, "dem Feuertempel gab."

² *Shari*, 174.

³ *Lamazad*, 115—coquettishly.

⁴ Thus spelt in the printed text.

Then the nurse, with her wonted cunning,¹ said :

" This is indeed a sore strait in which we are. I know not how to contrive a means. But surely God will help us, and we shall succeed. Now since this has happened to you, remain here no longer; whither I go follow you me."

They went into the storehouse² and took thence much property, gold, jewels, and pearls, and the three entered the bath. One branch of the water flowed into the garden in such a way that none knew of it; the three went through this passage³ and went into the garden. With seared⁴ hearts they went away from Moabad. There was a high wall to the garden. Ramin, like a panther,⁵ leapt on it and let down a veil;⁶ he drew them both up by the veil and let them down on the other side. Himself, he leapt down easily. The three went away with their faces veiled, as women.

Ramin knew a vineyard wherein was a good husbandman, his friend. He went to him then, and there they rested. Then he sent the husbandman of the vineyard to a good, trusty youth⁷ of his, and commanded that his best horses should be saddled, his armour brought; and if he had anything to eat to bring it there privily,⁸ so that no one should perceive. He went, and immediately they sent from home whatever he wanted.

When night fell they mounted, and the three went away so that the wind could not overtake them. No human being saw them. Such a plain | that it was only the 151 abode of dragons,⁹ waterless and fodderless! But to them together it seemed as Paradise: sand, stone, heat and thirst seemed to them, by reason of their love, like the grace of God, and in their nearness to each other they felt neither heat nor cold. They journeyed as if for sport;

¹ *Magalit'hi*, 184, 198.

² *Salaro*.

³ *Khhureli*, 155. R., 1220, 1896.

⁴ *Daghi*, 188.

⁵ *Vep'hhhi*, 174.

⁶ *Zetsari*, 222. R., *azetsarebs*, 698.

⁷ *Qma*—? slave, 147, 152.

⁸ *Sulit'ha*.

⁹ *Veshapi*, 181, 206; *Gvelveshapi*, 156.

not as if they were faring in such a grievous place and road. In China¹ on a stone it is written how hell seems to lovers like Paradise; when the beloved is near, the lover even when filthy will be beloved by her. The plain seems a vineyard, the snow a garden. The lover is like a drunkard, for when a man is drunk, woe and joy seem alike to him.

They passed that plain in ten days, and came from Marav to the city of Re. Ramin had a good friend and trusty; he had in Re a good dwelling, and was a very generous and good man. His name was Behroz, son of Shehro. His house was pleasant to abide in, and full of everything good. At twilight,² when through the darkness of night the road was not seen, Ramin went to the door of Behroz with glad heart and free from trouble. When Behroz saw Ramin, he could not for joy believe that he was not dreaming. He said :

“ Wherefore does a guest like Ramin come at such an hour ? ”

Ramin said :

“ Brother, hide this secret like thy virtue, and tell no one that Ramin is come, or that thou hast a guest.”

152 | Behroz thus replied :

“ God and my good luck have brought thee to be my guest. Thou art the master, I am thy slave’s slave.³ If thou commandest me, I will send everyone out of the house. My palace and whatever is in it are yours, and may God give me good speed in your service.”

Then Vis, Ramin, and Behroz rejoiced as they wished for a hundred days, so that none knew tidings of them. With closed doors and open hearts they sported by day, and after the appearance of night Ramin took his harp,⁴

¹ *Chinet’hi*. Cf. Chin, Machin, Sin, 26, 155; *chinuri*, *chineli*, 62; Manechineli, 18; Chini-Machini, 173. R., 834. For grammatical construction of “ *Chineths*,” cf. “ *Arabeths*,” R., 82.

² *Dzilpirisa*, R., 472. Cf. Cecelidze, *Canons of Jerusalem*, p. 840; Marr., I., 22, 23, note 1.

³ *Qmisa qma*, 188, 150, 174.

⁴ *Changi*, 165.

began to strike it, and chanted a song with pleasantly harmonious love verses,¹ saying :

"We are two good lovers, we have sacrificed our souls one for the other ; we are treasures of joy, but to the eyes of an enemy a two-headed arrow ; though we have joy and our heart's desire, our enemy by this is greatly dishonoured and wretched ; however much grief he brings upon us, we shall not separate, nor shall we ever be sated with nearness ; we can see nothing but joy ; this is given to us by our fate. Ah charming Vis sitting before Ramin ! Ramin merry with thee, thou with Ramin. Ah charming Vis, merry-faced, smiling-lipped ! I repent not my choice, I repent not this that I have done ; I rejoice in this journey, for I have hunted such a prey as Vis. Bravo !² Ramin, for thou hast attained thy desire ! Now, as thou wishest, rejoice in heart—thou hast the desire of lovers united, thou art in Paradise. Thy rose is unfaded, thy lover is a sun in whom thou findest whatever happiness thou seekest. Blessed of God be the land of Mah | in which the sun-faced 153 Vis was born ! Blessed be Vis's laugh, for the world³ itself is slave to her laugh ! Give me, O Vis, the royal glass⁴ from thy crystal hands, for in it is wine red as thy cheeks. Whenever I drink wine from thy hand I seem immortal. Wine cannot intoxicate me, grief does not come to me from thy love, grief weighs not with me. When thou lookest pleasantly upon me it seems like God's grace. My honour increases by thee, and my grief by thee disappears. My heart is an oyster shell,⁵ and thou a pearl therein ; my breast is heaven, and thou a star upon it. May God not let this oyster shell⁵ be without its pearl and this heaven without its star. May I always have joy in thee and with thee ! There will come such a time that they will remember our name, and all men will marvel at our love, fame, and joy. They must needs remember to all eternity such beauty. O heart, though thou hast seen great grief and

¹ *Shairi*, 165. R., 19.

² *Shabash*. R., 855, 741, 879.

³ *Satsul'hro*, 148.

⁴ *Dchika*, 165. R., 1144.

⁵ *Sadap'hi*, 140.

torment, now thou hast joy in thy lover, and thy heart's desire. My heart is filled with love, for the face of my beloved is a sun and a moon. Thou didst rejoice day and night in her face, and didst think of the death of foes and envious ones. Dates¹ and thorns may as soon be upon one tree as joy of lovers and grief together. Now, O heart, if thou sacrifice thy soul it is not a return² for one of her kisses. I desire my soul for such a friend's sake, and the world is created for such a deed. Now thou hast drunk wine, sorrow not! To-morrow whatever God has decreed 154 for thee will happen. | Surely to-morrow better will befall thee from Him than thou expectest to-day."

While Ramin drank wine, thus he chanted, he sang and spoke. Vis, the light of beauties, was merry. In both, love³ failed not; here Vis and Ramin thus rejoiced, and yonder Shahinshah was in grief and shame and anger, for that Vis had sworn and had thus lulled his suspicion.

When he began to seek Vis he could not find her. The world became darkened before his eyes. They sought her a day and a night. Fire burned Moabad's liver, and his heart also was lighted in a flaming furnace by her. When hope of finding her was cut off, his death became desirable to him; then he committed his throne to his brother Zard and entrusted it to him, for he was both his brother and his trusty vizier.

¹ *Khurma*, 77.

² *Mukap'ha*, 121, 207.

³ *Gulis monatzemi*, 194.

MOABAD'S WANDERINGS IN SEARCH OF VIS

MOABAD, all alone, went forth into the lands to seek Vis. Of all his great wealth he took but a sword and a horse, which he chose for their excellence,¹ and set out. He wandered alone in the lands. With pain and love in his heart he unceasingly thought of Vis. He journeyed over the whole face of the earth: desert and hamlet, sea and land, India,² Th'urket'h, Greece, China,³ Ran, and Eraq. He asked for signs and news of Vis. He could neither meet her nor find any trace of her. Sometimes he wandered on the mountains and rocks like a wild sheep,⁴ sometimes he roamed in the reeds⁵ and thickets⁶ like a lion, sometimes like a wild goat he stayed in the plains, sometimes he was in caves⁷ like a serpent. There remained no place where he did not seek.

For five months, like a mad and crazy man, he rode on Vis's track. Sometimes he was oppressed by heat, sometimes he was helpless from cold; sometimes he ate bread from wayfarers,⁸ sometimes he ate bread with shepherds; on what came to him by chance, on that he lived. He could not lie down⁹ to sleep. The king, the quondam autocrat, had the earth for mattress and his own arm for a

¹ *Buneba*, 209. R., 1087.

² *Indoethi*, 158, 212.

³ *Chini-Machini*. Cf. *Chinet'hi*, 151; *Chin*, 160.

⁴ *Arni*, 204.

⁵ *Lertsami*, 174. R., 176.

⁶ *Tevri*, R., 219, 222.

⁷ *Khhureli*, 150, 178.

⁸ *Mgravrt'hagan*. Graf says: "Der Mönche Fastenspeise." ? were monks (dervishes) common in the time of Al Gurgani? Cf. 11 and R., 1194.

⁹ *Kue*, 145, 175.

156 pillow. | During those five months he roamed in the lands. His comrade was grief, and his banquet—journeying. A big stone beat his heart, and much blood poured from his eyes. When he was roaming on his pathless way or rested somewhere alone, he wept so much that his clothes were drenched. He said thus :

“ What shall I do ? Lo, where is my army, my countless treasure, gold, and wealth ? For my heart’s sake I have abandoned all and suffer. Now I have neither heart nor royalty ; I remain loverless and realmless. At such a time even death is pleasant. In seeking her, when I have taken one step forward, so to say, straightway I lacked a limb. Grief is added to me so that my soul has become a weariness to me. A wind of iron,¹ as it were, strikes me, and the earth beneath my feet is fire. If I see not the fair one, all will seem to me like a dragon.² My heart is like a cloud, and the air its pursuer. From bitterness my strength is gone forth from me. If I had not fallen in love in my old days it would have been better and more seemly. I cannot contain so much sorrow and love together. In such grief a young ripe man becomes old ; what chance³ is there for an old man like me ? I have met such a Paradise upon the earth that from it I have seen hell to be goodly.⁴ This grieves me most, that when I hear the ill done by her I become more mad for her ; when I look into⁵ her narcissus (eyes)⁶ my love is increased, 157 as if I loved her shame, as if her evil | deeds pleased me. Mine eyes are blinded by love for her, and my heart is out of sorts.⁷ To me there seems no more joy in the world. Before I loved I was powerful and prudent in all deeds, now I am enfeebled and become so that I understand not what is bad and what is good. My former glory has passed away in vain, love for my friend has fleeted, the wind has taken away my gains, fire has burned my heart ! Now in

¹ ? blast from hot iron.

² *Gvelveshapad* ; *veshapi*, 151.

³ *Ghone*, 79.

⁴ *T’huad*, 109. R., 1055.

⁵ *Mov’huale*.

⁶ *Nargisni*, 173. R., 151, 397, 954, 1482.

⁷ *Ugunebo*.

the land who thinks anything of me? By all men I am now despised, and I am lightly esteemed of men; they think me mad and crazy, and they are right. I myself am worse than they. I have laid down joy and royalty, and roamed in the plains alone with wild beasts! Why did I listen then to the words of mine enemies and enviers when I had in my hands the unblemished beauty, Vis? Since I cannot bear to be without her, if God will have mercy on me and grant me but to see her once, I shall obey her word like a slave. I will give her all my realm and my crown; as long as I live she shall be master. Now, since I have learned the power of love, whatever pleases her that will I do."

When Moabad had wandered in the lands for six months, at one and the same time he became both beggared and sick. He feared somewhere from the treachery of Fate a lonely death as a wanderer in the wilderness, and that his enemy would take his place when he was gone. He grieved at his plight, and resolved to return and go home. Now he left off seeking Vis and hoped to find her afterwards. | He 158 returned and went to his city, Marav. Every man rejoiced at his coming, and all gave largesse¹ to celebrate his return. They thanked God, decorated the city, and on the roofs they set the sun-like women. They scattered such a quantity of gold and jewels at his entry into the city that in his land every poor man was enriched.

¹ *Samakharoblo*, 191.

CHAPTER XXX

MOABAD COMES TO MARAV AND LEARNS TIDINGS OF VIS

WHEN Shah Moabad forsook¹ his royal residence, his land and kingdom, and set out for the plains, then Ramin wrote a letter from the city of Re to his mother, and rejoiced her with news that he was alive.

Moabad and Ramin were of one mother, and the mother of Zard was another, and it was said that Zard's mother was from India.²

Ramin's messenger came secretly to Marav, more swiftly than the wind. But when Moabad and Ramin had gone away, from that time their mother's tears had not dried, because of her grief at their absence. From such a mother two sons like Moabad and Ramin had disappeared without cause, and for one wench had cast down mother and kingdom and army, and had preferred to wander in the fields. For her, grief was justifiable.

They gave Ramin's letter to his mother. He wrote :

"Fate has cut me off from knowledge and my brother for this reason, that my brother desired my death ; towards me he is merciless as a keen sword ; he wished to slay me and Vis. Since it is thus, I choose one hair of Vis rather than a thousand brothers like him. I can see nothing save pleasure from Vis, and I have nothing save insult and scolding from him. When I am away from him then indeed am I joyful. Why desires he my death ? He is my brother, we are begotten by one father and born of one mother. I am better in everything—in the *moedan* fifty such as he cannot equal me. Since I left Marav I have

¹ *Kue*, 145, 175.

² *Indoethi*, 155, 212.

done nothing but laugh and rejoice. Shall I approach him? I shall be torn to pieces like a wild goat by the teeth of a hound!¹ So much grief and mischance as afflicted us sufficed him not; why did he then wish to burn us with fire? He is not God that he should give us hell. Now, grieve not for me. Here in Rē I am healthy and well. I rejoice greatly in Vis's company. I send this letter secretly that thou mayst be glad in my welfare. Grieve not, the sorrow and joy of the world are fleeting. To-day I send thee news of me, and henceforth I shall let thee know how I am. Even such time shall I wander a stranger in the lands until Moabad's place remains Moabad-less, | then God and my fate will set me on his throne. 160 He has not drunk the water of immortality, nor is his soul bound upon the mountains;² and if anything happens and he die not, by thy love! I will assemble the armies and drag him from the throne, and Vis and I shall sit upon it. We cannot long remain thus. Mark my words, for this thing will soon happen. Vis sends thee much greeting and homage."

When his mother read Ramin's letter, she rejoiced and gave God thanks; and upon this joy Moabad arrived next day, came home and gave away much. Thus there is no trust to be put in Fate, for this aged mother on account of her children sometimes wept and sometimes rejoiced. Boast not thyself of joy, lest thy boast prove idle, and bewail not Fate; until it (Fate) be agreeable, complaint is in vain.

When Shah Moabad had rested at home for a week, he held a court, and then soon dismissed it; like a mourner he sat in continual sadness. One night his mother said to him :

" Why art thou always sad, so that thou rejoicest not for one moment? What afflicts thee so much? Thou art master of Eran and T'huran; from China³ to Qirovan⁴ all

¹ *Avaza*, 134.

² ? like the deathless Prometheus, the Amiran (Ahriman) of Georgian legend.

³ *Chin*, 26, 155.

⁴ ? Kerouan in Tunisia.

is thine and under thy command. Be not continually so sad. Why dost thou not pity thy soul for this lack of joy? Or why dost thou not have mercy at seeing me, thy aged mother, thus?

161 “*Shegoneba*: Every man improves in his old age when he forsakes the folly of youth. Therefore age is as a teacher to him, white hair an instructor. An old man is no longer bound up in evil-doing, and cannot seek youth in old age.

“Thou, as thou becomest old, growest worse and worse. My heart is wounded by such behaviour from thee. Swear to me¹ that thou wilt consider me and thyself.”

Shahinshah thus replied :

“O mother, thus is it with me, that my heart is warring against me ; I cannot rest a moment for love of Vis. However much I instruct it (my heart), it hearkens not to me, neither does it rejoice. Six months I have roamed² in the lands without finding trace of her, and God knows what trouble I have seen. Now this moves and afflicts me : that I live loverless. As long as this heart is in my body I have no leisure to fight other foes. If I could but hear from somewhere news of Vis, the grief of sorrowing would be lessened. Thus have I vowed to God : that if I see Vis I will yield up my whole kingdom into her hands, I will give it to her, and I shall no more go forth save by her word. In whatever she has sinned against me I will pardon all. As long as I live I will not disgrace her, nor will I do ill to Ramin. He is my brother, and let him be here as my hope and support.”

When his mother heard these words, fire burned her heart for Ramin’s sake. She wept so that she wet her lap,³ she stretched out her hand to Shahinshah and said :

162 “Swear solemnly⁴ to me that thou wilt do no hurt to Ramin | nor to Vis, and that thou wilt not be at enmity with them, and that thou wilt fulfil when they come hither all that thou now swearest ; that certainly thou wilt not

¹ *Zenaar*—? “I adjure thee,” 79, 207. R., 384, 407, 688, 718, 1194.

² *Maro*.

³ *Ubeni*.

⁴ *Mtcitzed*, 116.

disgrace me before God and man, and I will tell thee where they are, and whenever thou assurest me, immediately I will declare it unto thee."

When Moabad heard this from his mother he became joyful, and embraced her feet, he entreated her and kissed her face and hands a thousand times. He said : "I know thou wouldest have me live, and, as befits me, I love thee, and am at thy command. Now draw me forth from the burning fire, aid me and restore me to life by thy goodness. I shall not evade thy commands, and whatever thou wishest in this matter I shall swear."

Then he swore to his mother by the power of God, the Creator, and by every oath, that he would do no hurt to Ramin, nor would he remember anything against him, but would purge his heart of all enmity towards him, nor would he oppress him, nor be lacking in anything that befits a beloved brother, so would he hold him and be gracious to him. He would also keep Vis in love, and she should be Great Queen. He would forgive her all her offences, and would no longer remember them ; he would not disgrace her, but she should be regarded as his beloved.

When Shahinshah had sworn this and assured her that he would do no harm to Vis and Ramin nor betray them, straightway his mother wrote a letter to Ramin and told him fully¹ what Moabad had done, and of his oath concerning him. She wrote :

| "O soul of her that bore thee, thy heaven and hell is 163 my word. If thou hearkenest not to my word, nothing save woe and torment will befall thee from God. When thou readest this letter, set out speedily so that thou mayst find me alive. For lack of thee mine eyes have become blind with weeping, and my spirits² were near parting from the body.³ The candle of my joy is put out, and the rose of my soul is faded. Until thou comest I shall be thus, and I entreat God for a sight of thee. Shahinshah

¹ *Tsurilad*—in detail.

² *Sulni*.

³ *Khhorts'l'hagan*—(plural) "flesh."

also is tearful for thee, like me. As long as he could he roamed the lands for thee, and God alone knows what woes he saw, what hunger and thirst he bore ; and now he is come home again and greatly longs for thee. The sight of thee is the balm for his woe. He has sworn faithfully to me that he will do thee no harm, and will forgive thee all thy sins. Henceforth he will love thee as his own soul, and will hold thee in higher honour than his second brother. Thus thou shalt be lord¹ and commander² of his hosts, and Vis will be mistress¹ at home, and queen, and Moabad will think well of both, in word and deed, kind-hearted,³ and fulfilling your wishes. Now do not, after thy wont, wonder ; fear not, come, trust me. Thou canst not rejoice abroad, if thou hast all the gold of the world. Since the lordship of Khuarasan will fall to thee, why hast thou chosen such⁴ a house elsewhere ?⁵ However 164 much grief thou seest there, | it cannot magnify thee as if thou wert without sorrow here. If God has given thee a jewel easily, why shouldst thou seek a pebble⁶ with difficulty !”

She ended this letter, and then sent it off. When Ramin saw the courier he was afraid, and asked tidings of Moabad’s mother. Then when he read the letter he rejoiced at the oath and hope, and immediately went forth from the city of Re and set out for the city of Marav. He put Vis in a palanquin,⁷ like a precious jewel in a crown. Although Vis was behind a curtain, she shone forth like the full moon ; having enjoyed the desire of her heart, she had grown so plump and her beauty had so much increased that none could set forth her praise.⁸ Vis’s beauty had increased a hundredfold in the six months Ramin had spent in joy by her side.

When they came to Marav and Moabad saw them, he

¹ *Patroni*, 71.

² *Amirspasalar*, 105.

³ *Lmobieri*, 173. R., 1132.

⁴ *Dari* (?) .

⁵ *Samizo* (?). The text is evidently corrupt, and this word is unintelligible.

⁶ *Cenjsa*, 169.

⁷ *Cubo*, 47, 183.

⁸ *Keba*, 145.

forgot all the bygone grief they had caused him. As Vis's beauty had increased, so had Moabad's love grown ; he no longer remembered his former wrath ; he rejoiced to see his brother also. Their mother thanked God for the sight of Ramin, and when they saw each other there began rejoicing, drinking, singing of minstrels;¹ they no longer remembered the woes of this world.

¹ *Mutribt'ha*, 105, 190.

RAMIN BRINGS VIS TO MARAV, AND THE REJOICING AND
BANQUET¹ OF MOABAD

WHEN Moabad, Vis, and Ramin were all three delivered from grief, they sat down merry in the forgiveness of past sins; they wiped the rust from their hearts. One day Shahinshah sat merry with Vis at his side, sun-like in beauty, and in her crystal hand she held a glass,² and sipped from it. Moabad called Ramin too, and the three sat quietly³ together. Ramin liked the sound of the harp⁴ to hearken to, and Vis's face to gaze upon. Ramin himself was such a good harper that when he took his harp and played even the birds were hushed for pleasure. He began to chant love verses,⁵ and the face of Vis bloomed like a rose from delight at hearing him. He sang:

“Grieve not, wounded heart, thou art not stone nor iron. Murmur not at thy beloved nor thy heart. Now for a moment rejoice with wine, raise the glass, cast down grief, for thy life is short.⁶ Fate is variable, and turns thy woe to joy. The planet which oppressed thee is turned back to ask pardon of thee. There comes a day when thou 166 shalt be merry in heart, | free from every grief. Fate has changed thy state, it will change its own deeds too.”

When Shahinshah had drunk wine and his brain had forsaken him, wine drove away his reason, he wished

¹ *Medjlishi*.² *Dchika*, 153, 175.³ *Khalvat'had*—in privacy, 137, 196.⁴ *Changi*, 152, 208.⁵ *Shairi*, 152.⁶ ? *ara* in the text; lit., “thou art not short day.”

Ramin to sing a more pleasant song. Ramin again began to sing :

“ I saw a cypress, I beheld a walking moon ; I saw a garden upbuilded and voiceful, in which the seeds of love were sown. I saw therein a beauteous rose, unfading in summer and winter, which made merry the sad and increased the joy of the glad. I committed my heart to it, I have given it eternally to its love alone, and I gaze on the rose, the fruit of that garden. Day and night I rejoice therewith. The eye of envious men can harm no one. Whatever a man deserves God gives to him.”

When Shahinshah heard this song and the words, with joy his love for Vis was increased, and he wished Vis to offer him wine, for that wine (from her) would dissipate grief from his heart.

Vis offered him wine, and said :

“ O king of kings ! Mayst thou fare a thousand years as thou wishest. Mayst thou rejoice all thy days, may all thy deeds and desires be perfected by God ! Pleasant to-day is our drinking before thee, and we must heartily pray for thee. If thou commandest and she dares, let my nurse also rejoice ; let her be summoned before you, for she is very loyal to you and prays for you.”

He gave orders, they called the nurse, and seated her honourably before Vis. Shahinshah said to Ramin :

“ Pour out for me, since wine is more pleasant | from 167 the hand of a friend. It behoves thee to pour out merrily for me and thyself to drink.”

When he had drunk wine, Ramin could no longer hide his burning heart. He offered wine to Vis, and secretly said :

“ O, unexhausted one, drink merrily wine from my hand, and make me to rejoice in thy joy.”

Vis laughed, unknown to Moabad ; she praised him (Ramin) and said :

“ May God not exhaust our joy ; as long as we both live may our gladness not diminish. Prefer not any to me, for I prefer thee above my life. Do not forget me, and I will

not forget thee. May thy heart always be merry, and may Moabad's heart be burned by God for our sake."

Moabad heard all this discourse; but pretended he had not heard—he said nothing, he was calm. He said to the nurse: "O nurse, pour thou out wine for me." He said to Ramin: "Speak no more, take the harp and sing to it."

The nurse began to pour out. Moabad and Ramin were thus both mad for Vis. Ramin began a pleasant song:

"My face is become yellow for love. Now with wine I have washed off the yellow, and rose-coloured wine will remove the rust from my heart. My enemy sees my face merry, he cannot understand my secret. I do all I can that they may not see the burning of my heart. Day and night I am drunk with it, it makes me better forget my woe. | My beloved knows that for her I am cut to the heart. If I have reft life from lions, love has reft my life from me. O God, the power of the powerless! Thou canst aid Thy creatures. As day brings light to a dark night, even so may my heart be brought in joy from this woe."

168

A long time Ramin sang so, that even a stone would have melted with pleasure. Although he hid his love, his love appeared by many signs. Love cannot be hid: a mortal in the fire cannot conceal the burning. If he, being in such burning, drunk with wine, and a youth singing such verses, gazing at his beloved, and she sitting by his side, could not hide his love, it was not to be wondered at. When a pool of water is full, surely it must have some way to flow out; so is it when love weighs down the balance: instruction and knowledge are useless against it.

When Moabad was drunk, he went to bed with the sun (Vis). Ramin, cut to the heart, woefully went to his abode; his couch seemed to him all serpents and toads, and his coverlet thorns and burrs.¹ Moabad murmured in

¹ *Birciani.*

his drunkenness against Vis and began to reproach her, saying :

“ Evil is beauty unwedded to goodness.

“ PARABLE (*Araci*) : Thou art like a tree fair to look upon, whose fruit the mouth cannot swallow for bitterness. Thy sight and converse are like sugar, but thy character and | deeds seem to me like gall. I have seen folk right shame- 169 less for love, but I have never seen nor heard any more astonishing than you. You seem to think when you sit before me that you are alone. The lover's fate is always blind, so that he sees nothing with his eyes. It is evident in the sight of all, and yet he thinks none knows. With a thousand lemans¹ he thinks himself honourable. To lovers a pebble² seems as big as a mountain. You two no longer see the disgrace in the pleasantness of love. Vex³ me not thus, O moon, for too much boldness will turn the lover into an enemy. If one day a monarch is made an ass, do not dare to mount him. Sovereigns and fire are very stubborn. Though thou hast the power of an elephant and the boldness of a lion, yet be not so brave with a consuming fire. Trust not the calm of the sea, lest straightway thou see how it can toss, so that a man cannot stay on it. Do not thus brave my lack of suspicion, lest when my heart becomes angry thou canst no longer withstand me. Do not build such a wall that when it is reared it will fall on thee also. I have seen great woes for thy love, and the bitternesses of fate have punished me for separation from thee. Such⁴ dishonour is not well, for harm will come upon thee also. How long wilt thou trouble me thus accursed,⁵ and make me desire a sharp⁶ death from a hostile sword? What does it matter to thee if thou deliver me once and lay down thine enmity? Give love and have pity on me, and | I will commit to thy 170 care all my kingdom. Enough for me the bread of one servant!”

¹ *Curo.*

² *Cendchi*, 164.

³ *Mdzabunob* (?) ; *dsabuni*, 19, 180.

⁴ *Ezomyi.*

⁵ *Shecruli*—bound (bewitched), ? 86, 178.

⁶ *Dacap'huli.*

When Vis heard these words, her heart burned with pity for him, and with justice: a great sovereign thus smitten for her sake, he only remained pitiful; it could not be otherwise. She said:

“ O exalted¹ monarch and mine honourable lord! May God not give me life without you, and may He not separate me from you even for a moment. Thy nearness pleases me like the sight of mine eyes, union with anyone else is forbidden.² I lay my life under thy feet, for the dust of thy feet is better than Ramin. Have no longer any suspicion that Ramin will deceive me as long as I live. Since God has given me a sun like thee, why should I seek the light of a candle? Thou art the sea, and these other sovereigns are canals;³ thou art a shining⁴ sun, and they are moons; thy love seems to me equal to mine own soul; one hair⁵ of thy head is dearer to me than mine eyes. Whatever I did aforetime, the devil was in me. Now it repenteth me, and henceforth I will behave so that thou shalt be pleased with me.”

Shahinshah marvelled; he had never heard Vis speak like this before—he was indeed pleased in heart. Great hope was implanted in his trustful heart, and for this cause he fell asleep pleasantly.

Vis still lay awake; she was troubled about Moabad and Ramin. Sometimes she thought of one, sometimes of the other. But she thought most of Ramin. She heard the sound of footsteps above: Ramin evidently had gone up to the roof over the place where they were. He had not slept for love, and the darkness of the night did not amaze him. It was a cloudy night, it rained; the air wept like Ramin, for the moon was hidden from it and Vis from Ramin. Ramin, alas! sat on the roof hoping to see Vis; to him the snow seemed camphor, the dark night was as the light of day, the roof like Paradise, and the slushy⁶

¹ *Maghali*, 143.

² *Haramia*.

³ *Ru*—irrigation canal, 23, 194.

⁴ *Mnat'kobi*, 75.

⁵ *Betsvi*.

⁶ *Lamiani*, *lami*—wet, 173.

paths like musk.¹ Although he was away from her, the heart expecting to see her was thus consoled. There is nought pleasanter than love that fears discovery by a foe, avoids detection; and when the heart of one is equally hot with that of the other! Ramin feared not for himself, but lest harm should come to Vis; otherwise he would not have spared himself. When he had tarried a long time on the roof the cold did not dull him, for so great a fire consumed his heart. If every drop of dew from heaven had been as great as a hundred Mtevaris² it would not have extinguished one spark of his fire. The tears falling from his eyes were like Noah's³ flood; streams of snow and rain flowed. Ramin sat impatient in heart and burned in liver; freely he sighed and lamented:

"O beloved! Becomes it thee for me to be thus, that thou shouldst be inside and I beneath the snow? Ermine⁴ covers thee luxuriously,⁵ and I am here naked alone, sunk up to the knees in slush.⁶ Thou hast another lover, and sleepest with a thousand comforts,⁷ and knowest not my woe, thy lover's, how pitifully I weep. Ah, cloud! rain down fire from heaven upon me: to the heartless, all grief is pleasant. If I sigh I shall burn thee, cloud and air. O wind! rage and lay waste the land of Marav; shake her bed! Surely | she will wake and take pity on me! 172 Hearken to my piteous sigh, hear what a state I am in! I sit alone, I freeze in the snows, I am pitiable even to my bloody foe. I know if he heard of my evil plight he would be grieved; even he would weep for us."

Vis again heard the sound of footsteps; she heard that Ramin was there, and she sought means. Ramin could bear it no longer; he sent the nurse; and he was in such a state of impatience that he was losing his presence of mind. The nurse descended at once from the roof; she took this message from the disconsolate Ramin to Vis: "O moon,

¹ *Photzhkheri*, Ch. Dict., lynx. *Upe*—navel, 109

² The River Kura, in Georgia, 77.

³ Noah, 93, 187.

⁴ *Qarqumi*, 118. R., 123.

⁵ *Nebierad*, 158, 234.

⁶ *Lami*, *lamiani*—wet, 171, 173.

⁷ *Nebieroba*, 143, 204.

who hast soon forgotten me ! Unsated with the flow of my blood, why dost thou forsake me altogether ? What hast thou eaten from me that thou art thus early sated ? Am I not the same inexhaustible lover whom thou hast seen ? Then why hast thou turned thy thoughts from me ? Whilst I have been suffering in the snow oppressed with thoughts of thee, thou hast been reposing in many-coloured brocades and furs befitting thee. I am impatient for thee, and thou art thus indifferent ; thou art merry, and I am, and shall be, afflicted. Surely God cannot wish that thou shouldst repose and I be thus in distress ! Surely God will not give thee every joy befitting thee and wish me to be thus joyless ? And yet it is right ! Mayst thou be careless ; to serve thee befits me, I must suffer grief ; thou art delicate, thou canst not bear trouble. And thou knowest how pitiable I am, thinking of thee every day and night, pursuing thee for the sake of a chance of seeing thee on such a night as this, thus impatient, sleepless, heartsore, unquiet in heart. Save me from such a state

173 and such cold, | warm me in thy bosom, show me thy face, my life-giver, let me rest in thy kindness ;¹ let thy fragrant hair embrace my neck, which is become yellow like gold. My heart has lost itself in the search for thee, and thine absence makes an abyss² before me, and (heart) casts itself down thereinto in its loneliness. Make not my state worse than it is. If I be thus hopeless of a sight of thee, know that I shall lose the power of endurance. Let not my heart be struck by the scorpion³ of separation, cut not off from me the hope of seeing thee. As long as I live I am a captive bound⁴ in thy hands.”

This message the nurse gave to Vis, and smokelessly fire burned Vis. She said to the nurse :

“ What means canst thou devise for me, how can I free myself from Moabad ? He sleeps now. If he wake, he will perceive what I have done, and ill will befall me ; and if I

¹ *Lmobieroba*, 163, 184.

³ *Ghrincali*, 46.

² *Ormo*—pit, 136, 199.

⁴ *Shecruli*, 169.

leave him alone, he is sure to wake. Now this is the means : that thou lie down by his side. He will sleep and not know ; turn thy back, thy body and mine resemble each other, soft as silk,¹ and if he touch thee, he is so drunk and stupid² that he will not know."

Thus she spoke, she put out the candle, and made the nurse lie down at Moabad's side. She herself went joyful to Ramin's side ; in the pleasure of kissing she laid on Ramin's wound a plaster³ after his own heart. They lay down, and, lying together, covered themselves with many furs. He doffed his wet⁴ shirt, he put away grief from his heart. The narcissus⁵ and the winter rose were united ; they were beautiful together, like the moon and Jupiter,⁶ or, again, like high birth and | humility. The earth was filled 174 with flowers from their mouth, the air with the musk of their odours. The cloud passed away, and a star appeared. They two lovers were united, as they desired, so they pleasantly rejoiced. Sometimes the pillow was Ramin's arm, sometimes Vis's. Between them there was not room for a single hair. Sometimes they spoke from the heart, and sometimes jestingly.⁷ Thus were they there.

When Shah Moabad woke he stretched out his hand. The moon no longer lay at his side, instead of her he found a dry reed.⁸ In what did the old nurse resemble the ripe, young⁹ Vis ? Or in what does a bow resemble an arrow ? With the hand one may recognize a thorn and linen¹⁰ from side to side. Moabad, of course, perceived it, he leaped up from his couch like a panther,¹¹ he roared with anger, like a thunder-cloud. He held that sorceress nurse's hand so tight that there was no means of drawing it away. Shahin-shah said :

" What business has a *devi* in my bed ? When did I wed

¹ Reading *hariri*, 12, for *harili*.

² *Utnobo*, 198.

³ *Malama*, 192.

⁴ *Lamiani*, 171.

⁵ *Nargisi*, 156, 222.

⁶ *Mushthari*, R., 939, 944, 1897.

⁷ *Salaghobelî*, 185, 200.

⁸ *Lertsami*, 155.

⁹ *Qma*, 188, 152, 177.

¹⁰ *Shari*, 140.

¹¹ *Vep'khî*, 150, 185.

a *devi* as my wife? What devil made thee lie down at my side?"

Many times he asked: "Who art thou, and what art thou?"

The nurse gave no answer. He demanded a candle from the servants, he cried and called out much; but he waked nobody, nor did he get a light, and, save Ramin, none was awake. He feared the dawn, he softly lamented Vis's departure, and pearly tears besprinkled his rosy face. Vis had sat with the drinkers that day, and that night, too, 175 she had been sleepless. Then she slept.¹ Ramin in grief began to sing:

"How pleasant wert thou, O night, night to all, but to me alone bright day! When thou breakest into day for all, then thou wilt become dark to me. Prepare, O heart, now it is the hour of dawn, now the arrow of parting strikes thee! How pleasant were meeting if at last there were no parting. O Fate, thou knowest nothing save evil deeds for me! Thou gavest me joy, and in a moment thou dost rob me of it; if thou gavest me to drink of immortality, straight-way thou wouldst doubtless give me a goblet² of gall. An ill day was the first day of my falling in love, then I irrecoverably lost my heart. When I look (on her) I fear separation, and separation is indeed unbearable. I know no pitiful captive like me, and no healer like the Creator, for from Him I await salvation."

Ramin spoke thus secretly, he thought in his heart and sighed. He was distressed at his plight, he feared the dawn, his heart shrank from parting with Vis. Vis lay asleep,¹ and suddenly Ramin heard Shah Moabad calling to his servant, shouting and crying loudly for a light. Ramin was afraid, and woke Vis, saying:

"Rise quickly; that which we feared has come upon us. While thou sleepest¹ fearlessly, I watch in sadness at parting from thee and fear of dawn. I avoided one evil, and another worse has come upon us. I heard the voice and

¹ *Kue*, 145, 155, 158, 182.

² *Dchika*, 153, 165, 187.

shouting of Moabad, so that I have lost my wits at his shouting, and am become so angry that I will go down from this mud, I will cut off his head, and rid the land of this hateful person. It is easier for me to shed the blood of such a brother | than the blood of a cat."

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Vis answered him thus :

"Be calm, and use not unreason for reason. When thy luck assists thee, thou wilt fulfil thy desire without blood-shed."

Immediately she ran hastily down the roof. The wine had not yet been cleared from Shahinshah's (brain). Vis sat down forthwith by the nurse and said: "Thou hast hurt this hand of mine by holding it too tight, hold this other hand a moment so that this hand can rest a little, and lead me away wherever thou wilt; I will not run away."

When Shahinshah heard Vis's voice he rejoiced. He knew not her knavery¹ and cunning.² He loosed the nurse's hand from his two hands, and the hateful nurse was freed from the net. Then Shahinshah said :

"O Vis, ravisher of my soul! Why wert thou silent until now? When I called thee, why didst thou not answer me, so that thou hast angered me and made my heart to burn thus?"

The nurse was completely loosed from the snare. Vis took heart and cried out thus :

"Woe is me that I am always fettered by such a foe and bloodthirsty person! For I am like a crooked³-crawling serpent! However much I go, my trace seems crooked.³ May God give none on earth such a husband, for a suspicious husband is a net and seeker of mischance. My husband will not believe that I am lying at his side, and wishes to break and disgrace me."

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| Moabad, entreating forgiveness, spoke thus :

"Think not, O moon, I love thee not. Thou art more beloved than my soul, and thou art my joy! I have done

¹ *Sibidche*, 127, 184.

² *Ilal'hi*, 97, 193.

³ *Mrudi*, 123, 202.

this ill deed through drunkenness. Surely I have drunk poison¹ and not wine. Thou wert with me, I drank much wine ; it was pleasant to drink at thy side, and therefore I have done what has brought grief both to thee and me. May God make me unhappy if in any way I merit thy suspicion. If I have sinned against thee, I ask forgiveness, and since I am repentant, I deserve to be forgiven."

¹ *Samsala*, 86, 130.

CHAPTER XXXII

MOABAD'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST GREECE, AND HIS COMMITTAL OF
VIS AND HER NURSE TO HIS BROTHER ZARD'S CARE

WHEN Shahinshah forgave Vis and Ramin, they were merry and pleasant. Again there jumped down into their midst an envious devil,¹ and extinguished the candle of joy and uprooted the tree of love.

One day there came complainants against Ceisar, king of the Greeks,² saying: "We bring a complaint against a friend; he has forsaken thy friendship and is at enmity with thee. He is become powerful, and has broken his oath to thee. Many of thy slaves³ he has fettered and enthralled. Now a great army is come forth from Greece, and has laid waste even unto the half of the land of Ran."

| Others who had lost men taken captive⁴ came from 178 Khuarasan. They complained and cast ashes on their heads, they accused the armies of the king of the Greeks, and cried out, demanding justice against the injustice of Fate. Shahinshah became heavy. Immediately he began to prepare to set out. He called his armies, and made it known to the kings and magnates, and wrote letters to all parts. He assembled so great an army that there was not room for it in the plains. Shahinshah, in collecting his army, was like the vintage⁵ wind: as it leaves no leaf on the trees, so he left no man untaken by him.

At the time of departure he thought of Vis, how Ramin loved her, and how they were not sated of each other.

¹ *Eshma*, 44.

² Cæsar, 199.

³ *Qma*, 174, 184.

⁴ *Tquisa up'halni* (?).

⁵ *St'huleuli*—of autumn.

“Once she fled, she went away and hid herself ; I was slain by the thought of her, she made me mad and drove me forth into the fields. Now, if she do this again and go away from me, she will shed my blood. It is better that I should guard her well now. Great woes befell me in seeking her. I cannot bear to be without her. I suffered enough grief before when she was separated from me. When a man is careful, a serpent bites him not from the same hole¹ twice.” He thought on Vis, what he should do. Then he called his brother Zard, and said to him :

“Brother and soul of mine, hast thou seen in thy days a deed so wonderful, or hast thou heard what Ramin has done to me many times ? The doings and ill-will of Ramin, Vis, and the nurse have wearied me of life. I am enthralled by these three sorcerers, and there is no longer a balm for my woe. They are neither ashamed before men nor afraid of God, they listen to the instruction of 179 none, and I have no fear of fitters. Whatever is desired by the shameless one, he cannot miss doing it, and has no fear. Though I am so great a monarch, none on the earth is become more weak² and powerless than I. I do justice to all of the race of Adam, and my Fate does me a thousand injustices. Goliath³ heroes fly from me, and I am thus made a coward by one wench ! Still, all my affliction comes from my heart ; for love has forced me to regard my enemies as my friends, and I would have the whole world (so that I might give it) to that disgraced one, who would desire to have my blood to drink. My face has become so blackened with shame that the water of five hundred seas cannot wash me. My own wife is become mine enemy, and my sun (life) is darkened by her. My own brother has his sword drawn secretly and seeks a time, that when he finds the time he may slay me like a foe. I know not what my end will be, nor what Fate will do to me. Day and night I am like one soulless at the thought of this. Why do I seek a foe afar ? Even at home I have

¹ *Khhureli*, 155.

² *Bechara*—? silly. Cf. *bechi*.

³ *Dchabueni goliathni*, 31. R., 1511.

mine enemy. What does it avail me to shut the door if my water¹ rises from the inside? In my old age I am fallen² into such mischance that fortune has forgotten me. Now for this I wish to go away and leave Vis here. How can I keep her? For the sight of Ramin she will break a brazen fortress³ and iron chains. I know no means save this, that I take Ramin with me, and leave Vis here weeping in the castle of Ashkup'ht'hidevan.⁴ When Vis is in the fortress, and Ramin with the army, it will be impossible for them to meet. But I commit the castle to thy care, and it behoves thee to take pains and be watchful. My heart trusts none save thee, for in | all ways thou art a 180 chosen man and vigilant. I do not instruct thee how to act. As thou knowest and as is fitting, so guard these two witches. By no means let Ramin steal into that stronghold. Now, I am going a two hundred days' march in quest of glory, and if Ramin by any means meets Vis now, all my glory will be in vain and filled with shame. Though two hundred men built a house, one layer-waste can make their building in vain. I have three sorcerers at home, of whom one could overcome the devil-hosts with witchcraft. If a thousand *devi*s lighted upon those three, they could not by their cunning astonish⁵ them. As thou knowest, they have bound me thus, they have reft my heart of joy, they have broken the shield of my patience, they have shamed me in all the earth. A drowning man in a billowy sea feels not such fear as afflicts me and as I feel on their account."

When Zard heard this from Moabad, he said :

"O monarch, mightier than the sun, grieve not so much. Grief makes a man sick. What one man is there upon the earth of whom thou complainest and weepest so much as thou dost for such a wench as this? Even if she were a black *devi*⁶ in witchcraft, no one would be more cowardly⁷

¹ I.e., the flood.

² *Chadchrili*, 115, 192.

³ Like Danaë.

⁴ 214, Persian. ⁵ cave of the *devi*s. *Graf*, "Iškifti Diwân."

⁶ reading *hcuiran*.

⁶ *Graf*, ⁷ "Ahriman."

⁷ *Dsabuni*—subjected, 169, 209.

than she in my hands. I will guard her so that even the wind shall not blow on her, the sun and moon shall not look on her. Vis shall look on no man's face, and hear no man's voice ; I will so keep her in that castle until your coming. If thou command me, I will guard thy fair one as a miser guards his silver ; I will keep her as lovingly as 181 my soul, and | I will not let her go, even as a good man his guest from table."

Then Shahinshah with seven hundred chosen men carried queen Vis to the castle of Ashkup'ht'hidevan, on such a high mountain that the top reached to heaven. At night, instead of candles, the stars gave them light, and the garrison were the guests of the moon, and instead of a fire the sun warmed them. When Moabad took Vis to the castle, another sun was added to the one in the sky, the castle was beautified in the rays of her face like a blossoming garden. He set Vis and the nurse in the castle, and locked and sealed five doors ; he entrusted her to Zard ; the seal and the keys he took with him. He left as much treasure as she wished, and food and drink sufficient for a hundred years, if need be. To Vis's repose there was nothing lacking, save that Ramin was away.

When Shahinshah had finished fortifying the castle, he went to Marav. He made the army ready to march. He took countless hosts with him, and all were so choice that there were none better in Vezhan.¹ All were merry save Ramin, and he through grief for love immediately fell into a fever. His hope of seeing Vis was cut off, he hated life, he had no means of patience by day, nor did he sleep by night. Having left her against his will, his liver was filled with blood, and his heart burned like fire ; he had gone away in such a state that his enemies rejoiced. His only resource was converse with his own heart. Thus he spoke :

182 "Upon whom has such love come | that he cannot get away from it for a moment, nor remove it from his mind ? As long as I am in this woe of love I shall have no joy. If formerly the thorn of love pierced me, now I am so over-

¹ Var., *kueqanasa*—"in the land," which is probably correct.

come as if a poisoned arrow had gone into me from her whose absence I cannot bear for a moment. Now, since I am separated from her, why did I not die straightway? I am so unbalanced that whatever I look at on the earth, since I remain without her, for me it is as undesirable as if I were soulless. I desire life for the sake of being near her. The sight of mine eyes rejoices me only that I may see her, my tongue pleases me that I may talk with her, my hands I desire for her service! Now, since, to my misery, I am far from her, I am weary of all joy." Thus sighing, the sad one¹ sang a song to himself: "O heart, if thou art in love, sigh! Thou knowest that none acts justly to the lover, none has mercy on the lover, none pities his need. If I sigh, I am right; I am removed from joy, I am cut off from the light of the sun. They have sprinkled salt upon my wound, and given me to drink gall for sherbet.² O mine eyes! rain blood, let there be no day when thou hast pity³ on life! My kind of tears pour not forth like rain, for from rain the earth is beautified. My face is withered by the rain from mine eyes, the fire of grief has consumed my heart, and molten gold is poured upon my cheeks. Though they say weeping is a shame 183 to a man, in me it is seemly, for I think on the absence of such a love."

When Shah Moabad came, Ramin was still more assured what had become of Vis; pain was added to pain and grief upon grief. When tears were shed from his eyes, they washed the rusts from his yellow face. He always uttered piteous verses: "I am that heart-wounded one who is beyond all aid and hope. When my love is shut up in a castle, I am bound from thence⁴ with a thousand fetters and chains.⁵ Now, O wind, tell my tale and say to Vis: 'Without thee my heart is branded with many kinds of hot irons,⁶ thy face has remained in mine eyes, thy name

¹ *Kue-kue* (?), 175.

² *Sharbat'hi.*

³ *Stsqalob.*

⁴ ? from that time.

⁵ *Djadchui*, 144, 187.

⁶ *Shant'hi*, 193, 206—the hot iron, weighing 3 pounds, used in the ordeal. Cf. Laws of Vakhtang.

on my tongue. Thy face has left me of sleep, and remembrance of thee has taken away all my joy. How can I tarry in these griefs even if I were adamant?¹ If my sorrows at not seeing thee were divided among all the men in the world, even they could not bear them; and I alone have become such that if thou sawest me thou wouldest say: "It is not he." I cannot be delivered from this grief until I see thee.'"

When this was done, from that time Ramin, by weeping and sighing, became so emaciated and shrunken that he grew as thin as a hair, and in a week his arrow-like form became a bow. Shah Moabad did not forsake him thus. In fear they set him in a litter,² and Shahinshah took him to Gurgan. Ramin fell into such a state that his life was despaired of, as if a thousand poisoned arrows had pierced 184 his heart. The magnates came before Moabad | and told him of Ramin's wretched plight and state. With entreaty they thus spoke:

"O monarch, Ramin is thy brother and son. There is no one like him in any way, and to a sovereign such a faultless youth³ is desirable, not only as a brother, for he is useful in many ways.

"(*Shegoneba*): Be kind⁴ and not merciless; through such a brother is attached to thee the soldiery of a whole province. Because of him they will not venture on enmity, and he will increase the faithfulness of friends. He is for thee a strong castle, a powerful elephant, and a wrathful lion. If at any time he has sinned against thee,⁵ thou hast forgiven him. Now, then,⁶ revive not the old feud, and cut not off a newly-ripened branch. He is so spent that death is not far distant. Now, have pity on him, be compassionate,⁷ and release him from this service.⁸ Leave him here, lest he remain not (alive). Journeying is not

¹ *Almasi*, 192. R., 742.

² *Cubo*, 164.

³ *Qma*, 177.

⁴ *Lmobieri*, 173.

⁵ Note the form, *she ra odes u tzodebia*.

⁶ *Bare*, R., 1011.

⁷ *Moulmobierdi*, 173.

⁸ *Begara*, corvée, 200. Cf. Laws of Vakhtang.

pleasant even to the healthy, and to the sick and infirm it is exceedingly hurtful. Let him rest, he is wretched indeed ; and when he recovers let him go to Khurasan by thy leave, for there the water and the air are better. This country is sultry and unwholesome."

When the magnates had thus entreated him, Shahin-shah left Gurgan and went away. He (Ramin) remained there, and immediately became whole, for it was no actual disease that afflicted him. His saffron-coloured face became rosy; he set about seeking means of seeing Vis. [Smokeless fire consumed his heart, and he had no more 185 patience. He mounted his horse alone, and quickly set out. On the road, with a voice like a nightingale,¹ he chanted many kinds of songs, he hastened to arrive. Thus he sang: "O Vis, without thee life charms me not, nor have I repose nor heart's desire. In the quest for thee I cannot be affrighted. Though Fate be my foe, though the roads be full of serpents, and the grass of the fields be swords, and the sand lions and panthers,² though the clouds whose breaking I await be thundery, and all the earth armed with sword and arrow to fight against me, none, by thy sun ! shall deter me from seeking thee; and if I turn I am no man.³ If it befall me to see thee in the fire, I am fearless of its heat; and if lions are thy guards, my sword is their answer. A two months' journey seems but a step to me in the expectation of seeing thee. I should not wonder if the road to seeing thee be fearful, since lightning and thunder are met with in the neighbourhood of the moon." He communed with himself somewhat after this fashion, and thus shortened the length of the road.

When they took Vis to the castle, and Shah Moabad had gone away again, Vis completely made up her mind that Ramin was separated from her and gone to the army; and her hope of seeing him was cut off, the day became dark, and joy became disagreeable to her. Her rose colour became saffron, and pearls abundantly flowed from her eyes on the jasper⁴ (? of her lips).

¹ *Iadoni*, 74, 190. R., 749, 1282, 1331.

² *Mamatzi*, 145.

³ *Vep'khki*, 174, 194.

⁴ *Amartasa*, 62.

VIS'S LAMENT FOR RAMIN'S ABSENCE

SHE struck her face so mercilessly with both hands that it became violet. She put on blue¹ raiment as if she were in mourning for the absence of her lover. The scratching of her face reddened her bosom with blood, her face became blue as her raiment, her raiment red as her face. She screamed and wept, and said to the nurse :

“ What shall I do now, nurse ? My youth and joy, my repose in the world and delight in all love have completely forsaken me, so that I shall live no longer. I would sacrifice for Ramin’s love my heart and the sight of mine eyes, for now I desire all my past woes. I never thought this in my heart : that we should ever separate or should not be able to rejoice always as we wished. But the decree of God has first torn the curtain of shame as it were from our love, now He has brought upon us this unintelligible separation. O beloved Ramin, never to be removed (from my heart), as long as thou wert near thou thyself knowest what my joy was. In thine absence my existence does not seem life to me. What is pleasantness itself or repose ? | In season and out of season I cannot get rid of this thought : that thou art suffering in fight with the foe. A coat of mail² instead of a caftan³ weighs upon thy form, a helmet⁴ instead of a fur cap,⁵ a sword tires thy hands instead of a

¹ Mourning colour, blue, 11; black, 206. R., violet, 1181; blue and green, 1479.

² *Djadchvi*, 183. R., 426, 1346.

³ *Caba*, 118.

⁴ *Muzaradi*, 144, 200. R., 430, 1375, 1389.

⁵ *Chachi*.

glass,¹ the heat of the sun burns thee, and this discomfort annoys thy tenderness.² Thou makest thy foes' blood to flow like thy lover's. Why should I become a foe to myself by thine absence, so that I hearken not to desire and counsel and follow thee? O that the dust of thy horse might strike me! But though my body is here, my heart is not cut off from thee; drowned in blood, it suffers the toils of travel at thy side. Toil not too much, for it is grievous to thee. It is impossible to endure without thee. It is not pleasant for the lover to lack the lover. Do not that to me which is not like thyself. Remember me and think of my state. But when did the rich ever think of the poor? Thou hast only seen the fire of my love, now the smoke also appears. The present pain of long separation has made me forget my former woes. My head is like the cloud of Noah's³ deluge; for the tears flow from mine eyes richly as the Djeon.⁴ My heart is full of woe, I have no means to contain it, and it appears outwardly, and I toss in a sea of blood."

Vis lamented, and by reason of the pain at her heart could not stay still in one place. The nurse for her sake was burning as fiercely as she, and taught her all patience.

| *Shegoneba*: Thus she spoke: "Be patient; a man 188 should not give up courage even if God never give him his heart's desire. Every grief is drunk to the dregs by man; the tree of patience always bears the fruit of joy, although to the downhearted the eating (of the fruit of joy) more alleviates (suffering) than talk about patience.

"Now hearken to what I say and be patient; it is not likely thou shalt suddenly attain thy heart's desire. Save God, none can help thee, none other can deliver thee from this thraldom. Be calm and submit, pray to God and comfort thy companions. Surely God will weary of this great grief of thine and will extinguish the fire of your heart! I cannot bequeath thee more than this, that I counsel thee to be always patient."

Vis replied thus:

¹ *Dchika*, 175.

² *Nazukoba*—niceness, softness.

³ Noah, 171.

⁴ Gihon, 148, 218. R., 781; Euphrates, 218.

“How can a heart which is burnt up with smokeless fire have patience? Thou hast heard that saying how a certain man advised somebody, who said thus: ‘Ho, friend, worry me no longer, this strikes my heart with no more force than a walnut falling on a dome.’¹ Ramin went away without seeing me, and how can I bear to be without him? Thy advice and a bridge on the other side of a great river are the same to me.² Thy heart and mine are not one. It is the hem of thy skirt that burns, and my heart. What does it matter to thee³ if I am in trouble? Thou tellest me that I have no resource but patience. It is easy for on-lookers to watch warriors. I have no pity for thee. Thou art a horseman, and knowest not the pain of travelling; thou art rich, and knowest not the pain of poverty; to the well-fed the hungry man seems drunk. Thou, nurse,
 189 counsellest for me and advisest me to be patient. | Does this irremediable madness afflict thee also like me? Ramin was more impatient. The downhearted know not patience. If the fighting lion have no power in its heart, the fox with its cowardice⁴ overcomes it. Think not that this woe and crying is easy for me or gives me pleasure, and that the flow of bloody tears from mine eyes seems not irksome to me. No sensible person desires his own distress and unhappiness. Thou by thy meddling⁵ hast dug this well of misery for me; thou hast cast me in, and now forsooth thou art seated pleasantly and carelessly at the top, and sayest to me: ‘Be patient, pray to God, thou hast no resource save this, and there is none to deliver thee from this place.’⁶ It is easy to cast a felt cloak⁷ into the water, but it is difficult to draw it forth again.”

¹ *Gunbet'hi*, 243.

² Cf. 203.

³ *Gagva*, 103, 109, 207.

⁴ *Sidjabne*; *djabani*, 107.

⁵ *Sakmianoba*, 91.

⁶ Cf. R., 250-251.

⁷ *Nabadi*.

RAMIN GOES FROM MARAV TO ASHKAP'HUT'HIDEVAN TO BE
UNITED TO VIS

WHEN Ramin went to Marav from Gurgan he found Vis no longer there. He saw the vineyard of his joy dried up, and his garden flowerless. No more he saw the sun of the world in the court, he no longer perceived the seat full of the perfume of her hair, nor did he see the town joyful as of yore. So to speak, the court and its surroundings wept, like Ramin's heart, the absence of Vis. That pleasant court, made joyous by her, seemed to him a prison, and through grief, like a pomegranate in its rind, he burst, wept all openly; on his saffroned face pearls rained. He laid his face on her seat, and, like a nightingale¹ upon a rose, he spoke, sighed, and piteously lamented. Thus he spoke: "O court, it is thou that wert adorned by the presence of the celestial sun, in thinking of whom my wits have fled! The earth was adorned by her face, and the air was as full of her perfume as now the heart is always full of gall. Singing-girls² with wondrous kinds of strains sang joyously to the listeners. O court, thou art no longer that court, for thou wert perfect in all points! Upon thy gate, too, the beasts of the field had come to gambol, and the gate was of desired men. | Inside thee I no longer see the star, moon, 191 and sun, by whose absence all around³ is darkened! Fate has treacherously been fickle to thee as to me; it has deprived thee of the day of joy, and me of my heart's desire and patience. Where, indeed, is that time for me when I

¹ *Iadoni*, 185, 225.² *Mutribni*, 164.³ *Sakhedavni*—things visible.

rejoiced here, or when will it be for me that I shall again enter thee merry? To be here thus a single day, by God, seems to me more desirable than a thousand years."

He lamented and wept. Hopeless he wandered thus through the gates of the town, and turned his face towards the castle where Vis sat. He went so hastily that he travelled day and night. Very dark was the night when he came to the foot of the castle, although for him and Vis that night became lighter than day. The sentinels¹ even could not see on account of the darkness. Ramin knew the room in which she was. He came underneath, used his skill, for in all the world there was not an archer like him. He shot with straight thumb an arrow to that spot, and said: "Mayst thou be fortunate for us, soulless messenger! Everywhere thou art a messenger of death, but now rejoice my soul by uniting it to a soul." The arrow went straight, and fell² on the roof of Vis's bedroom.³ Immediately the nurse took it, recognized it, and was filled with joy. She gave it to Vis, and said:

"Behold the happy messenger arrow, sent by Ramin as a bringer of good tidings,⁴ for it bears a mark. Henceforth be no longer in distress; thank God, and rejoice in thy lover."

Vis looked at the arrow and read Ramin's name upon it.
 192 | From excess of joy how her heart beat! she could not grasp so much joy, she kissed it, she bloomed, and said: "O happy arrow of Ramin, and chosen one⁵ of my soul! All men are wounded by thee, and thou art as a plaster⁶ on the sore of my wound. Thou art a messenger from his arms—may they ever be powerful! I shall tip thee with jacinth,⁷ and I shall make thee a pure⁸ gold quiver⁹ of my heart, so that thy master may rejoice. Though I have been wounded with ten thousand arrows like thee in his absence,

¹ *Gushagi*, 142, 201.

² *Chaidchra*, 79, 204, 219.

³ ? canopy of her bed.

⁴ *Makharoblad*, 158.

⁵ ? for *sarche* read *sarcha*—arrow, shaft.

⁶ *Malama*, 173.

⁷ *Iagundi*, 47, 196.

⁸ *Khalasi*, R., 1414.

⁹ *Karkashi*, R., 72.

now that thou art come, henceforth their adamant¹ sharpness is turned to joy. I have seen no healing arrow save thee, nor have I heard a pleasanter message than thine."

When Ramin had shot the arrow, he fell² into thought: "What has my arrow done? Has it gone whither I wished? Has it gone in the wrong direction, and has somebody else picked it up? If Vis knew my plight she would seek a thousand means to take me up. Then she would say in her heart: 'O heart, sacrifice life, fear none!' By the power of God, the Creator of all, I will not turn hence until I die or attain my heart's desire. Though the wall of this castle were iron, molten like my heart, all poisoned round about, men's eyes like asps³ and serpents, their garrison like *ders*, not even thus could they turn me away. By God's help and trust in my (strong) arm | I will attempt to carry off 193 Vis, and again be united to the ravisher of my heart. As long as I live I have no other task but to seek Vis. However great be the foes who fight me, and though their hearts be towards me like the hearts of Moabad and Zard, even then I shall not be driven away. But they are fires; we are of one family, and they can discern good and evil in a man."

Here Ramin was fallen into thought in seeking means, and there Vis was bound in the net of love. Her tongue cried out for Ramin, and impatiently also her heart sought Ramin. There he was in the cold, and her not being there near him pierced her heart with a lance⁴ and iron,⁵ and she sought some means⁶ of union.

The nurse said:

"O soul of thy mother, planet and fortune⁷ all aid thee, and this also is from thy luck,⁷ for it is so cold that by reason of the frost no man will be out of doors. All the sentinels and guards of the castle have taken shelter inside from the cold. Twice only the sentinels have made their

¹ *Almasoba*, 183, 220.

² *Chaidchra*, 106, 179, 191.

³ *Aspiti*, 122. R., 1209.

⁴ *Lakhvari*, R., 4, 506, 566.

⁵ *Shant'hi*, 183, 205.

⁶ *Ila'hi*, 176.

⁷ *Bedi*.

rounds, and they have gone in from the frost. Since it is so, and the sentinels are not posted on the roofs, all will be easy to us. Ramin is here near us, though in the darkness we cannot see him. He knows that we are in this chamber. He has often been in this castle without Moabad, and knows a thousand ways of entering. Let us open one of these play-windows¹ and light a candle. He will see us from outside, and will approach. And then we shall bring him in."

When she had said this, the nurse lighted a candle; by 194 her cunning | she could fetter even *devs*. When Ramin saw the candle he was joyful, and came towards it. He perceived why the candle was lighted, and like a falcon² he mounted the rock. A sage says: "So will the lover's heart be: neither will pain oppress him nor will hurt hurt him. In seeking the loved one he will forsake his faith or change it. The length³ of the sun seems small, and the surly lion a fox. Greediness for love is such that a barren plain seems a vineyard, a mountain a hair, and the sea a canal.⁴ No one is sold like the heart falling in love,⁵ for no one hales the heart before a judge. Love knows not beauty and ugliness, for love's reason blooms in blindness."

When Ramin approached on the rock, Vis looked down from above, and folded in two forty pieces of Greek⁶ brocade⁷ and whatever else she could find, knotted them together stoutly, and let them down. Ramin came and mounted even more nimbly⁸ than a panther.⁹ When he was come up into the castle the sun and the moon were united together, and embraced each other like milk and wine in one glass; gold and pearls mingled, musk and amber¹⁰ were mixed together; dark night became light as

¹ *Sat'hamasho*, 197; *sarcmeli*, 107, 217; *jalousie*—window whence ladies could look at sports.

² *Shavardeni*, 197. R., 459, 606.

³ *Sigdze*—? distance.

⁴ *Ru*, 170, 205.

⁵ *Arshicoba*. Cf. *ashicoba*, R., 25, 348, 1067.

⁶ 2, 177, 202, 212.

⁷ *Stavra*, R., 672, 1414.

⁸ *Uciscised*.

⁹ *Vep'hhki*, 185, 199.

¹⁰ *Ambari*, 140.

day, and winter became spring for them. The heart of both lovers rested from grief. Like those who have given their hearts,¹ they embraced one another, kissed one another, and then went into the bedchamber. They brought them food and wine. Sometimes they discoursed of what had befallen them, sometimes they embraced each other. The night | was dark and cold, but for them three kinds of 195 candles burned: the joy of meeting, the light of their faces, and the redness of the wine. The three friends were united; they drank and rejoiced according to their will. Outside the door was shut, they were in happiness² and security of heart. None of them had any fear that anyone should find them out; nor did they fear that they would ever be divided, and that their joy might turn to grief. They preferred being thus this one night to being far from each other with a thousand years of life. When Ramin had fulfilled his heart's desire—as he had desired it to be, so had he found it—he began, after his wont, to chant a song with pleasant voice:

“ What matters it to thee, O heart, though thou hast seen the woe of love, and undesired things have come upon thee! There cannot be joy without grief, nor could we have been thus pleasantly sitting together without it (grief). Joy unseen of grief will not be, and a good name which has not seen grief is not to be found. Though thou cross the sea seeking thy beloved, in the meeting thou findest a precious gem; though gall was not lacking to thee in absence, now thou hast the consoling fruit. O heart! I counsel thee be patient; the end of all woe will be joy. When a man has tarried a long time in grief, then he thanks God all the more for joy. Now am I delivered from hell, and seated joyous in Paradise. I have sown love and reaped joy; the dazzling moon has turned to me in love. I have not been abandoned, and I have not been put away from remembrance even for a moment. | I have 196 devoted myself in everything, and therefore Fate has not forsaken me.”

¹ *Gulis monatzemi*, 154.

² *Mordchmit'h*, 142, 202, 215.

Upon these words Vis rose, and to her lover's name filled a glass, held it in her hand, and said :

"I drink this to the name of my Ramin, seeker of love, who forsakes not his friend : my hope, brighter than the light of mine eyes ! I am so hopeful and joyous in him that since Adam none has had such hope of his friend. Till the day of death I shall be the handmaiden of his constancy ; it will eternally befit me for my heart to make jubilation¹ at the mention of his name."

Immediately she drank out the glass and kissed Ramin. Vis's discourse charmed Ramin, drinking in seclusion² and holding in his hand the musk-like scented hair of his beloved. He gazed on the jasper,³ ruby, and pomegranate flower.⁴ He forgot the bitter acacia⁵ in the joy of the sweet hyacinth.⁶ Every night until dawn he had a rosy couch and a sunny pillow. When they woke in the morning they sat drinking, rejoicing, and singing. When Vis held the glass in her hand Ramin sang as follows :

"The ruddy⁷ wine wipes rust from the heart ; in the presence of the beloved wine is its messenger. Ruddy wine changes me from yellow to ruddy ; it is the balm of love's

197 sickness. Love is an enemy, and wine | is the disperser of the rain of my grief and the increaser of my joy. To-day happiness is mine. God and my good fortune have helped me, for the ravisher of my heart is before me. Sometimes I lie on violets and roses, sometimes on lilies ;⁸ my lip hunts between the amber⁹ and musk¹⁰ from the ruddy musk, and hunts the ruby sweeter than sugar.¹¹ In my garden a red rose blooms. I make very¹² merry in coming by the road of desire. I am that falcon¹³ who, flying high, hunts none save the sun of heaven. My merriment¹⁴

¹ *Zari*, 199. R., 303, 313, etc.

² *Khalvat'had*, 165.

³ *Iaspi*.

⁴ Var., "eagle, musk-crystal, and pomegranate."

⁵ *Acaci*.

⁶ *Iagundi*, 192, 212.

⁷ *P'heroani*.

⁸ *Sosani*, 224. R., 72.

⁹ *Ambari*, 212.

¹⁰ *Mushci*, 49.

¹¹ ? some words omitted in the text.

¹² *Dia*, 85, 207.

¹³ *Shavardeni*, 194.

¹⁴ *Nishati*, 91, 198. R., 323, 666, 707.

is a golden-clawed lion, which seizes upon my soul. Every day I gather from the face and hair of my beloved bundles¹ of roses, hyacinths,² musk, and sugar. I will not desire a garden save her shining face ; I will not desire any tourney,³ for this place is sweeter to me than Paradise itself. Whatever pleasant things God has created, all is here for me. The sun is my banquet, and my cupbearer the moon, and therefore am I merry."

Then with pleasant words he said to Vis :

"I drink from thy hand wine rosy like thy cheek and blessed⁴ as thy face ! No pleasanter season than this can be, and no spring like thy face ! What do we know of what awaits us to-morrow ? Come, let us take our share in the part of joy to-day. We cannot bring back to-day to-morrow. Thou dost not desire my destruction, nor shall I be separated from thy love. Joy and heart's desire are fitting ! How do we know what God has decreed upon our heads—for thus thou wast fettered by Moabad in this castle, and he left me sick in Gurgan, not knowing that our meeting had been decreed by God in the heavens. 198 Who save God the Creator could have done this ?"

They were thus nine months, in season and out of season, joyful and merry ;⁵ they wearied not of gladness and drinking. They had in there food and drink even for a hundred years of repose ; they wished not to open the door to go out. See what a long time their heart's desire and gladness lasted ! They cast off rust from their hearts. So much gladness wearied not Ramin, nor did the vigour⁶ of Ramin's joy tire Vis. One soul dwelt in two bodies, for they had nothing to amuse them save conversing, loving, and fondness. They rejoiced in one another. He excelled as a ball-player,⁷ and the plant of joy was watered with wine.

The gate of the castle, like that of grief, was shut ; none

¹ *Sapalne*, 45.

² *Sumbuli*, 70, 223.

³ *Thamashi*—sport, game, 198.

⁴ *Sviani*, 91, 202. R., 82, 448.

⁵ *Nishtianni*, *nishati*, 197.

⁶ *Nihtianoba*, 91, 197.

⁷ *Moburthali*; *burthi*, 117. R., 20.

in the land knew their secret; but in Marav Zarnages,¹ the daughter of Khaqan (the Khan) knew. She was of good birth, and in fairness and loveliness her commanding² face was like the sun, and she was chief of sorceresses. In her art and witchery she was so remarkable³ that she made roses bloom from a steel anvil.⁴

When Ramin came to the city of Marav he had traversed the court of Moabad, and asked news of Vis from everybody. When he learned that she was in the castle, as we said above, he became so affected⁵ that the Didjila⁶ flowed from his eyes, his face was bathed in tears. When he could not see with his eyes Vis's beautiful face, nor hear her pleasant discourse, he wandered about the city, possessed like a madman, seeking Vis, | and hastily directed his steps towards the castle where Vis was. He was like a panther⁷ in his fleetness, and he did not seem to trouble any longer to rush up and down in the rocks like a hawk.⁸ Sometimes he went up the mountain so that his head was in a cloud, and sometimes he went down as into Joseph's pit.⁹

This witch Zarnages¹⁰ knew that Ramin went thither, and that there could be no balm for his grief save the sight of Vis. In her heart the daughter of Khaqan¹¹ resolved to tell Moabad.

¹ Cf. *Zarniges*, 6; 199, 200. Graf, "Zerrinkisch eine Tochter des Chakan."

² *Sapatrano*, 126, 144.

³ *Magalit'hi*, 150, 207.

⁴ *Gurdemli*, 144. R., 5.

⁵ *Utznobo*, 173.

⁶ *Didjila* (259) or *Diladji*. Cf. *diladja*, *didjla*, R., 813, 880. Car., "name of a stream in Kashmir" (? Jhelum).

⁷ *Vep'hkhi*, 194.

⁸ *Kori*—? falcon. R., 355, 432, 606, 708.

⁹ *Iosebis ormo*; *ormo*, 173.

¹⁰ 198, 200.

¹¹ The Khan, 198.

CHAPTER XXXV

MOABAD LEARNS THAT VIS AND RAMIN ARE TOGETHER

WHEN the sovereign Shah Moabad returned victorious and joyful from his campaign—as he wished so had been the event—he came home to Khuarasan, and entered the city of Marav. He had won both the land of Ran¹ and Somkhit'h,² and had taken hostages and tribute from Ceisar, King of the Greeks;³ he was victorious over all monarchs, he had overcome his enemies. His pomp and triumph⁴ reached even unto heaven in his rejoicing, and the earth had no room for the multitude of his warriors. When he collected his stuff,⁵ it made a heap of treasure 200 higher than a mountain; so to say, it reached the sky in its loftiness. He had captured the ball⁶ from the monarchs by his own (endeavour) and the sport⁷ of Fate; the goal⁸ was his, and the victory over all sovereigns. There were warriors from every land at his gate, and hostages, too. He was become sovereign of all sovereigns, and none knew another equal to him on the earth.

When he went thus joyous and victorious to the city of Marav, his joy was turned to grief. From Zarnages⁹ he heard the news about Ramin; his heart was filled with blood, and his brain boiled with smoke from the excess of his heart. For a long time he sat thus broken. Then, grown yellow

¹ Ran, 214.

² Armenia.

³ Cæsar, 177.

⁴ Zari (196) *da seimi*. R. 803, 818, etc.

⁶ *Burt'hi*, 117, 198.

⁵ *Lari*, R., 54, 1042, etc.

⁷ *Silaghe*, 174 (*salaghobeli*).

⁸ *Hela*—the goal or resting-place outside the ground at the game of ball (*burt'hi*).

⁹ Zarnages, 6, 198.

with wrath, he sprang up, instructed the soldiers, commanded them again to set out, and began his preparations. He sounded the alarums.¹ The nobles and soldiers learned what road they were to travel by. The trumpet² began to lament in Moabad's court: "O monarch, none can endure such travel." Also the drum³ began to cry and sigh for the separation of Vis and Ramin: "Woe if the lovers are to be separated." In the castle, so to speak, Ramin's heart felt that the state hitherto so pleasant was become bitter.

Shahinshah went hastily, eager for Ramin's death, and all the army marched dissatisfied because of this: that half of them had not come home yet; those who had been on forced service⁴ for a year had not yet loosed their belts nor doffed their helmets⁵ when he again summoned them to the 201 difficult road to the castle. Some thought thus: | why was the former service⁴ not enough for us that now he summons us elsewhere? Some said: if we are to be travellers until we protect Vis from Ramin, we need wondrous horsemanship. Some said: it would be much better if instead of Ramin a thousand Greeks like the King (of the Greeks) appeared. They said a thousand things.

Shahinshah went swift as the wind with his army. The dust of his hosts reached the clouds. The sentinel⁶ set to guard the castle saw the dust, and came and told Zard: "A dust is visible which reaches to heaven, doubtless Shahinshah comes; otherwise there could not be so great a dust." In the castle there was noise and confusion, and a swaying to and fro⁷ like the wind among willow-trees.⁸ Zard was not yet gone forth to meet Moabad. When Moabad came to the castle gate his heart was full of enmity and gall, he shouted angrily to Zard, and said:

"O greatest plague of all my plagues! May God the Creator deliver me from you two brothers! When it is a time for manhood⁹ a dog is better than you: a dog remembers the bread it has had from a man, and you do

¹ *Asaqari*, 143.

² *Buci*, 97.

³ *Dumbuli*—? pipe.

⁴ *Begara*, 184.

⁵ *Muzaradi*, 187.

⁶ *Gushagi*, 191.

⁷ *Bruali*.

⁸ *Tirip'hi*, 36.

⁹ *Catzoba*, 115, 208.

not even do that. When God created you I know not what planet was in the ascendant. One of you is equal to a devil in sorcery, and one like an ox and an ass for stupidity. Thy place is in the herd, among cattle. How hast thou kept Vis from Ramin? I am worthy of all the shame that can fall on me, since I have appointed an ox head of the castle. Thou sittest carelessly,¹ thou shuttest the gate, and thinkest: "I have done well and have zealously done my duty. Thou sittest there, and like an ox lowest in thy stupidity. Thou canst not perceive this, that secretly inside they laugh at thee; as they wish, | Ramin thus rejoices; 202 and outside the whole country knows this story. Thy seat is certainly an enviable one for thee!"

Zard thus replied :

"O happy² monarch, be applauded; ³ many a year mayst thou return merry from the road. Grieve not for evil deeds, let not the devil's deeds into thy heart. Thou art a puissant⁴ sovereign, and canst speak both ill and good. If thou knewst what is true, none would dare say aught to thee; and if thou wert to speak crookedly⁵ a thousand times nobody would dispute anything whatever thou saidst, and say it is not so. Thou blamest for something of this kind: that I have not taken thought. You took Ramin away from here; I, alas! how do I know what he has done? He was not a falcon that he should soar from Greece and fly down here; nor an arrow that he should speed to this castle, as it seems Ramin has done. Look at the locked door sealed with your seal; the dust of a year lies upon it. How could Ramin break into such a castle as this whose gates and walls are all of brass? Sentinels are fixed day and night at all approaches and roads—thus I guard her. Even if Ramin is a sorcerer and knows a thousand wiles, he could not even then get in; and if he opened these doors and shattered⁶ them, who resealed them with your seal? Believe not this evil report, O sovereign. Do not be gloomy,

¹ *Ghaphali*, 142.

² *Sviani*, 197.

³ *Vashad*, R., 290, 379.

⁴ *Mordchmuli*, 195, 215.

⁵ *Mrudi*, 178.

⁶ *Dalesta*, 66, 222. R., 166, 1016.

and do not slay us. Speak not thus, for it will not please the wise, and wisdom will not buy that thought for one grain."

Shahinshah said :

"O Zard, why dost thou chatter triflingly?¹ How long 203 wilt thou talk on the subject of gates and seals? | What does their strength avail me? Thou hast not been careful. Watchful guards of the castle and gate are much better than keys and seals. When God created the heaven on high He also appointed the stars to be watchmen. What is the use of this seal to me, since I have not tied up the drawers² with a sash?³ Wherefore gird thyself with a belt if thou hast not donned drawers? Since I committed this to such a foolish person as thou art, whatever glory I have gained this year by my sword, all, by thy doing, seems to me a shame to me. Very bright was my court because of my glory, but now its doors and walls are all blackened and darkened."

While he was angry a little time passed ; he took out the key from his boot,⁴ threw it to Zard, and said :

"Open the door, though this possession of mine be as useless as a bridge on the other side of the water."⁵

The nurse from the inside heard the knocking at the gate. She lent her ear, she heard the voice and conversation of Moabad and Zard, she trembled with fear. She went to Vis and Ramin and said :

"For us the sun of misfortune has risen in the East—Shahinshah is come like black clouds ; thunder and lightning have appeared for us, and from them a stream of woe begins to flow. Now shall we see burning fire upon the earth, for his smoke will darken our bright day, and our affair cannot prosper with him."

All three were stricken with fear on the spot, and no longer knew what they did. They could think of no plan but this : to let Ramin down where they had taken him up. Although he | would have preferred death then and

¹ *Bedit'hsa*, 87.

² *Nip'hkhavi*.

³ *Khondjari*.

⁴ *Mogui*, also means *magus*—priest.

⁵ Cf. 188.

there to separation from Vis, because of her frightened heart and disgraced name he went into the rocks. He wept at parting from his beloved, and for the fact that he had no resource left save patience. He feared Moabad partly for Vis's sake, partly for his own. He knew not the road, nor what to do. He said to his heart: "What shall I do, O heart, what shall I do? Whatever of mine is not lasting, it is thou that hast done it all to me. Strive not with my fate. Sometimes thou causest my blood to flow with the sword; sometimes thou takest away my soul, and sometimes thou embitterest my being!"

"PARABLE (*Araci*): Fate is like an archer; separation is always its arrow and my soul its butt.¹ My patience is like a broken caravan,² and my soul like a sacked city.

"But now I was a free³ sovereign, and now I am a wild sheep⁴ straying in the rocks. My eyes are like clouds passing over the mountain, and they rain a thousand woes on my heart. Weep, that the rock may resound to me, and let me shed tears that I may dye the stones red. Thunder does not resemble my sighing, for it is from the wind, and the latter from fire. The cloud is not like mine eyes, for from it falls dew in drops, and from them it flows in streams. But what can I do that befits me? Ah! but now I had in my hands my heart and my heart's desire; now I no longer have my heart, nor have I the ravisher of my heart. My state is as if I had been heaven, and now am become earth.. My joy was like a fleeting flower of spring."

| When Ramin had roamed a long time in the rocks, 205 remembrance, tears, grief for parting from Vis, his thought of the plight he was in, all united together; and his feet, as if they had been fettered, could no longer go forward. He wept for his heart and his beloved. When he had lavishly wept, the rust was wiped from his heart; as a land washed by rain he rejoiced. Wherever Ramin sat down, in that

¹ *Sasagno* (? cf. *sagnoba*, 142).

² *Karavani* (*mokaravnəni*, 84).

³ *Nebieri*, 171, 208.

⁴ *Arni*, 155.

place he made an irrigation canal¹ flow from his eyes. He lamented so piteously that he was pitiable even to his foes. He said :

“ Thou knowest not, O ravisher of my heart, what a plight I am in, or how wearisome life is to me without thee! Even a netted² partridge³ pities me, distressed at thine absence. If thou hast seen any grief, Moabad, consolation and joy are due to thee.⁴ I am worthy of woe, for I have sought means to mine own death. But, by thy sun, I did it for thy⁵ sake. May God not grant me a moment of life without thee. Thy form is imprinted on my heart.⁶ If I count all thy beauties one by one, I have not enough days to tell them, and I cannot attain them. If mine eyes weep, they do well, for they can never see loveliness like thine. With a thousand entreaties I pray God that I may not die until such time as I shall see thy face again. But since I am without thee, I doubt whether I shall remain alive till to-morrow ! ”

206 | When Vis the heart-ravisher parted from Ramin she remained as if she had a dragon’s face ;⁷ thus it befell her, and she forgot fear for herself and remembrance of woe. In grief for Ramin’s plight, like one mad she turned round in the room and knew not what she said or did. She piteously struck her peerless face with her crystal⁸ hand. Sometimes she scratched her face, sometimes she tore her hair. The earth was full of the musk from her hair, the air was full of fire from her sighs. When she sighed and tore her hair, in the castle it was as if they had made smoke of musk and aloes.⁹ Her face and her breast were made blue by her blows, and Euphrates¹⁰ flowed hotly from her eyes ; her heart was like a red-hot iron,¹¹ for when she struck her breast sparks flew forth. She loosed her gar-

¹ *Ru*, 194.

² *Makhe*.

³ *Cacabi*, R., 227-8.

⁴ Text obscure, meaning evidently : “ Moabad will give thee consolation,” etc.

⁵ *I.e.*, Vis’s.

⁶ *Cf.* R., 247.

⁷ *Veshpis pirsa*—like Medusa ; *veshapi*, 151.

⁸ *Brolı*, R., 204, 260, 404, 676, 693, 1118, 1165. ⁹ *Alva*, 148.

¹⁰ *Ep’hrati*, R., 676 ; *Gihon*, 187. ¹¹ *Shan’thi*, 193, 219.

ments¹ and rent them. The ground seemed like heaven with her raiment; above, like stars, flashed gems and pearls. She doffed her clothing woven of gold, and donned black like a mourner.² Her heart was filled with woe, and her face with dust. She remembered fear for neither Moabad nor Zard. All her grief was for Ramin, and her thought for him alone, for the unwelcome parting from him had happened so suddenly.

When Shah Moabad entered Vis's chamber he saw Vis's face scratched, and he saw forty pieces of brocade and satin knotted together lying in front of Vis and the nurse. They had not had time to undo half of the knots, and Moabad had been too quick for them. The nurse hastily hid herself for fear of Moabad, because she was the doer of all the mischief and shamelessness. Queen Vis had torn her clothes and bitten her arms with her teeth; she had rent her musky hair, | and a stream of blood flowed down 207 from her eyes.

Shahinshah said :

“ O Vis, born of a *dev*, and cursed with every curse! Wisdom is far from thy soul and shame from thine eyes; righteousness is far from thy character,³ and thou hast impiously⁴ put away honour from thy behaviour and disgraced thyself and my royalty. Canst thou not tell me what I should do to thee in return⁵ for this? Or what else save death is due to thee? Thou art so cunning,⁶ and such a sorceress that a strong castle like this and an open⁷ country seem alike to thee. It would not be wonderful if by thine enchantment thou couldst bring down the stars from heaven. It is of no use⁸ to beat thee, thou hearkenest not to counsel, no oath⁹ nor vow binds thee. Hitherto, I have tried thee with pleasant and bitter, and with thy stupidity each was useless. Thou never rejoicest in my pleasantness nor fearest my anger.

¹ *Sheekhsna*, 136.

² Blue, the colour of mourners, 11, 186.

³ *Zne*, 87.

⁴ *Uzenarod*, 112, 208, 210.

⁵ *Mukap'ha*, 111, 153.

⁶ *Magalit'hi*, 198.

⁷ *Vace*.

⁸ *Gagva*, 188.

⁹ *Zenaari*, 161, 217.

“PARABLE (*Araci*) : Canst thou be a wolf, harmful to all ? Canst thou be a *dev*, wearied of good ? In form¹ and beauty thou art like a precious jewel, in essence² and deed a despicable broken potsherd. Very desirable art thou in loveliness and beauty, longed-for and beloved, and thou art like Fate in fickleness and inconstancy. Woe to thy form¹ so fair and pretty, blotted by many evil habits and shames !

“Much³ have I warned thee with such counsels, much have I entreated thee secretly, saying : ‘Do not thus, O Vis, provoke me not so much, for the fruit of sinning against me is thy death ; and in thy stupidity thou hast sown the seed 208 of sinning against me.’ | Now is come the harvest-time of thy sowing. I no longer seek thy love, and can endure no longer ! I am not iron nor stone.

“*Araci* : That I should expect humanity⁴ from thee is like variegated⁵ writing on water.

“This is thy counsel : to sow seed on a salty soil.⁶ As I have never seen joy from thee, and, save in bitterness, have had no repose from thee, I will treat thee without pity ;⁷ I will so satiate thee with bitterness that thou shalt never think of Ramin’s name ; never more will Ramin rejoice in thee, nor thy heart remember Ramin’s name, nor will he strike the *ordzali*⁸ and harp⁹ before thee, nor shalt thou sit at his side drunk with love ! I will make you both suffer so much that not even hard¹⁰ rocks could bear it. As long as you are lovers to each other I desire to seek no foe abroad. Whenever you are united together you think of nought save my death. Now I shall be to you whatever you thought to do to me, and I shall have rest from my blood-thirsty foes.

“PARABLE (*Araci*) : If I have the heart and mind of the prudent, why should I keep two foes in my bosom ? It is

¹ *Sakhed*, 13, 207, 220.

² *Nivvhad*, 97.

³ *Dia*, 197.

⁴ *Catzoba*, 201, 220.

⁵ *Dchreli*, R., 121, 161, 1465.

⁶ *Cf.* 40.

⁷ *Uzenaro*, 207, 210.

⁸ *Ordzali*, 121.

⁹ *Changi*, 165.

¹⁰ *Tini*, 100. R., 404, 731.

better to have a lion lying on the road than an enemy at home. A foe posted as sentinel, a snake sitting on the curtain, are alike to a man."

Then Moabad seized hold of the musky hair of the self-willed¹ Vis and dragged her on the ground; he bound her hands behind her, like a thief, and beat her so mercilessly with a whip² all over her head and body that wherever he struck her flesh was rent and soiled with blood. Her crystal form brought forth blood | as a mountain brings 209 forth rubies. Wherever the whip did not strike it was like indigo,³ her white and red body and flesh became like saffron, indigo,³ and poppy.⁴ He also gave the nurse a hundred such strokes, all on the head and face. He did not pity her even unto death; either it would kill her or make her reveal her witchcraft and sorcery.⁵ She fainted on the spot. Vis and the nurse from the flow of blood seemed clothed in crimson. Nobody thought they would remain alive. Then, when they were thus far gone, he cast them into a dungeon, and set his heart at rest about their survival, and firmly sealed the door upon them. Every human being⁶ or hearer of this story was grieved at their plight. Shahinshah also dismissed his brother Zard from the command of the castle, and committed the castle to another man. He himself⁷ travelled swiftly for a week, and came to the city of Marav. He was deeply grieved for their plight, and greatly repented striking Vis. He said in his heart:

"What is this nature⁷ of mine, what is this smoke which has arisen from my heart, and makes me hate the world and health? What was the reason of so much anger and impatience of mine against such a loved one, who is dearer to me than my life? Though I am the king of all kings, through love I am such a coward⁹ that I am become pitiable to mine enemies. Why am I become angry with

¹ *Nebieri*, 204.

² *Mat'hrahhit'ha*, R., 206, 1890.

³ *Lila*, 46. R., 885.

⁴ *Qaqacho*, 70.

⁵ *Mchkhibaoba*.

⁶ *Adamiani*.

⁷ *Buneba*, 155.

⁸ *Dzabuni*, 180.

such a beloved one for whom I am mad with love ? Through excessive ignorance I have fought against mine own life. To-day look to to-morrow, and thou shalt no longer think of an affair stupidly ; thou hast done to-day a deed for which to-morrow thy heart will ache. Let the lover never be disobedient to his heart, for his disobedience 210 will burn that same heart with fire. | Why, O lover, art thou angry with her without whom thou canst not spend a moment ? ”

CHAPTER XXXVI

SHAHRO'S LAMENT AND WEEPING FOR VIS

WHEN Shah Moabad came from the castle he brought not the sun-faced one with him. Shahro, the mother of Vis, knew it, and went weeping to meet him. She began to scratch her face and beat her head. She cried aloud: "O soul of thy mother, and changer of all my woes to joy! Why has not Moabad brought thee? What has befallen thee from this impious¹ *dev*, or what has he done to thee? What grief has befallen thee from him who was master of thy fate?" Then she said to Moabad:

"Tell me for what reason thou hast not brought my Vis? What hast thou done to my sun? Why is the sky become moonless? I will show thee thy court now laid waste, thy Paradise become hell, if thou givest me not now without tarrying my daughter into my hands. I will cry aloud, so that I shall be pitied even of the rocks, and they, afflicted with me, will cry aloud. I shall cause all flesh to wonder. I shall shed streams of blood from mine eyes if thou show me not my Vis. Now I will make thy royalty gall to thee; | God Himself will not prosper thee with the 211 blood of the blameless Vis, so that even thine own eyes will become thy foes."

When she began this discourse and plaint, weeping before Moabad, Shah Moabad also wept and said:

"Whether thou weepest or whether thou smilest, whether thou blessest or revilest, I have done that I have done, and would that I had not done it, and that God was not wroth with me! I have cast away my joy and honour! Thou

¹ *Uzenaro*, 112, 208, 213.

shalt never see Vis's face again, save in the earth, which thou shalt see beautified by her (dead body), in the fallen cypress¹ bewailing her youth, her bright face darkened, her blood changed by rust, and her hair falling off."

When Shahro heard Moabad speak thus, she fell on the ground and began to beat her head and face. The court was made fragrant by her body, and her tears made a lake of blood; the arrow of grief struck her heart, and she lamented:

"O treacherous Fate, thou hast stolen my precious jewel! Surely thou, like me, didst love that jewel, O Fate, for, like a miser² his gold, thou hast buried and hidden her in the earth! Surely thou wert envious, and hast taken from me the cypress³-like one and planted her in the eternal vineyard! Why didst thou let her grow up so beautiful, O Fate? and since thou hast let her grow up, why hast thou cast her down so unfeelingly? Now there will at some time rise up somewhere under the ground

212 a fragrance of amber! O earth, hitherto | thou hast swallowed only men; now thou hast begun to eat the sun and moon. Why was that not sufficient for thee, why wert thou hitherto not satiated? Why hast thou taken from me the gladdening sun of my heart? Since the earth wears out pure silver, now I am afraid that the earth may harm thy body also, therefore is the day darkened to me. The light is darkened. Let not that earth which has dared to hide her bring forth its fruits. Henceforth the light of the moon has no brilliance, since my moon is hidden in a dungeon.⁴ Care for me, O heaven and earth! Unite together, O stars, to weep for me! O light of thy mother, graceful cypress,⁵ sun-faced, jacinth⁶-cheeked, amber⁷-haired, thou wert the disperser of my woes, thou wert my pride and joy; now I have thee no more! In whom shall I rejoice, with whom shall I be merry? To whom shall I complain of my so unjust bereavement, or where shall I

¹ *Cuparozi.*

² *Angari*—greedy, avaricious.

³ *Ciparozi.*

⁴ *Dilegi.*

⁵ *Saro.*

⁶ *Iagundi*, 196.

⁷ *Ambari*, 197.

seek him who has slain thee? He has shed the blood of every man, but he has killed me more than all. I will bring wise men from Greece¹ and India.² Surely some one will know a means to aid me. My beautiful one, thou wert alone on this earth, and lack of a peer³ wearied thee. Maybe in Paradise thou shalt find thy like, for here, my soul, there is none. Since I have heard of thy death my life has been dead with thee. Now, of what avail is thy raiment, who can wear thy garments? Whom shall I find with thy beauty of face? Now, who will dare to make this known to thy brother Viro? Who will carry the tidings that Shahro is weeping | for Vis's death? The sun of 213 beauties is gone. I remain a seeker for Vis, and a mourner for her. May the castle of that impious⁴ pig not remain, nor the mountain, for the eye of my happiness has been blinded there. There my moon was extinguished, and, slain, no longer appears to me. Now the devils and *kadjis*⁵ rejoice; they know what mischance will befall in return for this blood—how many monarchs and magnates will die. In return for the blood of Vis I will make Djeon⁶ flow from the blood of her foe and from mine eyes. If I wept as much blood as a thousand Djeons, and made as much blood flow from Moabad, it would not make up for one drop of Vis's blood. What shall I do? Inexplicable and unintelligible is it to seek Vis's blood. O city of Marav,⁷ chief of Khuarasan, do not make easy such unrighteousness. In place of the stream of Tsul,⁸ may mischance come upon thy land, from the leaves of the tree mayst thou see innumerable lances and swords of warriors. Shahinshah will no longer repose in thee. I will cause a stream of blood to flow in thee. Let those who sought the blood of Vis don their armour.⁹ From Khorav¹⁰ to Bakhot'har¹¹ so

¹ *Saberdznet'hi*, 194.

² *Indoet'hi*, 155, 158.

³ *Udjubt'hoba*.

⁴ *Uzenaro*, 210, 217.

⁵ *Kadjis*, 111, R., 190, etc.

⁶ *Gihon*, 187.

⁷ *Marao* for *Maravo*.

⁸ *Tsuli*—? name of river.

⁹ *Abdjari* (*meabdjre*, 47).

¹⁰ *Khoravi*—? cf. *Kharav*, 134.

¹¹ *Bakhot'har*.

many mounted warriors come against thee that the horses' feet will make a prey¹ of thee. The land of Moabad is laid waste for my beloved daughter's sake. Now sugar no longer has sweetness, for the coral² hyacinth is hidden from the sight of the eyes; now no longer will the cedar³ grow up, since my balsam⁴-tree is fallen. Now musk and amber no longer give forth perfume, since the colours of her hair have become unseen. The rose has no longer any redness, since the colour is gone from her cheeks. Why was the 214 sun led up there to such a castle | as is the abode of *devs* and *kadjis*? Alas! my Vis, queen of Ran!⁵ Alas! my Vis, lady of T'hurket'hi!⁶ Alas! my Vis, sun of Khuarasan! Alas! my Vis, moon of Koistan!⁷ Alas! my Vis, hope of monarchs! Alas! my Vis, ravisher of the beauty of the fair! Alas! my Vis, light⁸ of the hosts! Alas! my Vis, hope of thy mother! Why did I bear thee, a sun, in the time of old age? Why did I so easily betroth⁹ thee to a godless *dev*? Why did I bring thee up, since at last I gave thee to a pitiless *kadj*? Now I am going away, I shall weep with burned heart till my death. I shall go into Ashkap'hut'hidevan,¹⁰ and shall cast myself down thence; death there seems as joy to me. I cannot find my heart's desire as long as I am without her. Why should I live without my heart's desire? But however desirable death seems to me, I shall not kill myself until I fulfil my heart's desire upon Shahinshah, and until he dies before me. I could not bear to think of this: that my Vis was in the earth and Shahinshah in his garden sitting drinking. It shall not be that my Vis is become earth and Shahinshah merry with a wife at his side. I will go and rouse mischance, I will reveal¹¹ the hidden secret from the earth. I will go to the wind and say: Art thou not that wind which secretly stole perfume from Vis, and didst spread it over

¹ *Iavar*, 142, 223.

² *Dzotseuli*.

³ *Nadzvi*, 67.

⁴ *Valsemo*.

⁵ *Ran*, 199.

⁶ *T'hurket'hi*.

⁷ *Koistan*.

⁸ *Mnat'hobi*, R., 134, etc.

⁹ *Vemzakhle*; *mzakhali*, 145.

¹⁰ 179.

¹¹ *Gavamzhghavneb*, R., 429, 1268.

the earth? Now, I adjure thee by her love, help me against her foe! I will go to the moon and will say: Thou art that moon who wert envious of the beauty of my Vis. I adjure thee by her learning, for there is none like her save thee, | help me against her bloody foes! I will go to 215 the cloud and say: Thou art she, for thou imagest forth my Vis's hair. Now help me: rain upon her bloody foes the thunderbolt¹ of mischance, lightning, hail and thunder, and beautify the land of her love with gentle rains. I will go to the sun and say: Of a truth none save her was thy like. Be gracious to her who is like thee; rise not on the land of her foe, and give increase of light in the land of of them that love her! I will go to God the Creator and beseech His aid. I will lay my face on the ground before Him: O Lord, merciful, mighty! Rain the fire of Thy wrath² upon Moabad's head! Why hast Thou given power³ to this unrighteous one, who every day becomes more and more merciless towards Thy creatures. He pities not Thy servants,⁴ and fills with blood the land made by Thee. His deeds are trenchant as the sword, and his hand rapacious as the wolf. O Lord God, avenge my blood, and because of the lack of her lay waste his court and throne! As this doer of unrighteousness has caused smoke to rise from my heart, even so lay hold on his soul and heart with the flames of Thy wrath!"²

When Shah Moabad saw her weeping piteously, and heard Shahro lament thus, he was ashamed of himself and afraid of Viro. He said:

"O more beloved than mine eyes, and much tried in grief by my deeds! Thou art my beloved sister, Viro is my brother, and Vis, my queen and ravisher of my heart, is the light of mine eyes, and more to be desired than my life and royalty. I so love my foe Vis that | I prefer Vis 216 to my life, and if she had not followed her own will and had not done me more shame and unrighteousness than my death itself, she would have found great fruit from my

¹ *Mekhi.*

² *Riskhui.*

³ *Mordchma*, 88, 142, 195, 215, 223.

⁴ *Monat'ha*—slaves, 89.

majesty. Now I have hidden her state from thee, and my secret has not been truly made known to thee. How could I set about slaying one whose life I prefer to mine own life? Although I am her captive, she has not pitied me. I prefer to die before she dies. But now I shall send a man to the castle to bring Vis. I cannot bear to be without her even for a moment, so we shall have her back. I know well what will befall me from her. I shall find much more bitterness, and from her I shall receive great disobedience and difficulty. As long as Vis is queen in my harem¹ I expect no repose from her intrigue² and treachery. Since I am not merry one day in my heart if I do not rejoice in Vis, it is no wonder."

Then he said to his brother :

" Set out for the castle, and, swifter even than the wind, go thither with two hundred men, take two horses with thee, and bring Vis swiftly hither to me."

Zard went to the castle with two hundred men, and in a trice brought Vis to Moabad and Shahro. Thereupon Ramin went to Zard's and tarried secretly in his house one month. | Then Zard entreated Moabad for Ramin's sake, and Moabad forgave him yet once more. He sewed up Ramin's rent luck, the *dev* of enmity has hidden itself again, and the garden of joy blossomed. Anew the palace shone with the face of Vis, sovereign of sovereigns, moon³ of moons. Pleasant was Moabad's state in rejoicing and drinking, and in gazing on the sun-faced Vis. The crystal hand of Vis was stained with the ruddy wine. The merry Moabad began to drink, and generously to distribute gifts among the armies. For a long time they thus made merry. The news of them was spread in the whole country as a tale, and the fame of Moabad's justice. They forgot the grief they had formerly seen. Neither does joy remain by Fate, nor heaviness ; in the end it makes grief and joy equal. Let a man possess his heart in mirth, that his days be not shortened, for man lasts not till the end (lives not for ever) ; vain regret is unprofitable.

¹ *Sadedo*, 116, 132.

² *Khlat'hui*.

³ Lit., "most lunar."

Moabad went to Gurgan to tarry a few days. Thence he returned merry to the palace¹ at Marav; he rejoiced in Vis's merriment. Then he fortified his court thus: wherever there was a window² or a way in, he caused them all to be riveted up with Indian steel,³ so that not even a zephyr⁴ could in any wise enter; he locked it up with a Greek key,⁵ sealed it with his seal. He entrusted the key of it all to the nurse, and said:

“O *dev* cunning in sorcery, I have seen much impiety⁶ from thee; but now I entrust this to thee on oath.⁷ Guard the door and every entrance, so that Ramin by no means can enter. I am going to Zaul⁸ to hunt and attend to affairs of state. | I shall tarry there one month. Guard 218 my palace, these gates which I have sealed, until I open them. Again I tell thee, on oath I entrust it to thee; thou thyself knowest that untrustworthiness on the part of one who is trusted is unfitting. Thou hast proved that it is better to be faithful to me, and if not, if I find thee not treacherous to me, I will fulfil thy heart's desire. I know this, that I shall increase my woe when again I try the tried; but now I have chosen thee to be for this duty, for I have heard the wise say: Let a man entrust his possessions to a thief, he will guard them better.”

He counselled the nurse much, trusted her, and gave to her the keys. He himself went out merry on a good⁹ day. He stayed near the gate of the city and rested there a day, thinking about Vis. He was grieved at the separation and sad for his royalty. He had invited Ramin also to go and hunt with him, and he was with him. In the evening Ramin went to the city, and the same evening Moabad sought Ramin to drink with him. It was reported to him: “He is gone to Marav.” He knew for what reason he had gone away. When Ramin saw the door of the palace thus fastened, he went down into Moabad's garden, which was

¹ *Sra.*

² *Sarcmeli*, 193, 221.

³ *Indaurit'ha* (212) *basrit'ha rcinit'ha*.

⁴ *Niavi*, 228.

⁵ *Berdzulit'ha* (212) *clitit'ha*.

⁶ *Uzenaroba*, 218, 220.

⁷ *Zenaroba*, 207.

⁸ *Zaul* (?).

⁹ *Cargsa*—lucky, 141.

in the vicinity of the palace, and roamed about like one possessed, because he could not see Vis. His heart boiled ; he cried out and sought Vis :

“ O beloved, since I have been separated from thy face, from that time my foes rejoice. Go once upon the roof that I may see thee. I have one hand of grief upon my 219 head and one upon my heart. On this dark night I am as if I were drowning in a bottomless sea. Although I now roam in the vineyard, yet am I swimming, as it were, in seas of my tears. I have watered the garden¹ with tears, and I have made the earth muddy with blood. But since thou dost not know that I am here, of what avail to me is this weeping and shrieking. If I sigh from this boiling heart, I burn the palace and keys ; but how can I burn that place where the ravisher of my heart is ? If fire seize upon thy skirt, my burnt heart will be completely consumed to ashes. Thine eyes continually, mercilessly destroy me and slay me, using thine eyebrows as bows and thine eyelashes as arrows. They pierce my heart. Though I am parted from thee by my Fate, yet thine image is not hidden from mine eyes ; sometimes I tremble in sleep, and sometimes I shed tears of blood. How can sleep please me, being far from thee ? or how can I live not looking on thee ?”

For a long time he wandered about weeping, and, wearied with the flow of tears, he lay down to sleep among the roses and flowers, though he could not sleep soundly because his heart was full of woe and his eyes were full of tears. That garden seemed to him like hell. He was so near Vis, and yet he could not get close to her. Then Vis knew that Ramin was there, and, like one mad because he was not beside her, she rushed round the room, scratched her face, tears of blood flowed. The thought of not being able to see him branded her heart like a hot iron.² With a thousand entreaties she begged the nurse, beckoning with her finger³ :

¹ *Bostani.*

² *Shant'hi*, 206. Cf. Code of Vakhtang.

³ R., 529, 1079.

“O, in God’s name, remember my bringing-up by thee and | thy love for me. Once again help me, succour me, 220 take the seal from my heart and from the door, and show me Ramin’s face like a moon in this dark night. He is going a far road, and I think hope of my life is leaving me with him. This night is dark like my fate, and I imagine my heart’s ravisher in the dark for my sake. Being so near, powerless, seeing these so firmly sealed doors, I would that he were a hundred days’ journey from me if I am thus unable to see him. Come, O nurse, have pity on me. How luckless and thwarted in desire have I been created by God from the beginning; the door of the joy of my heart is locked with a thousand keys. I have had from Him enough of this melancholy and plague of love. Why should there be so many locked doors to my joy and state? When the door was closed on me, my wounded body and soul were again made sore; immediately I became hopeless of life. When my lover curled¹ my hair, from that time its scented ropes² bound my heart tight. But since his beautiful form³ has been away from me, in my eyes I have had a diamond⁴-pointed⁵ arrow, and I have no power even to live. Pity my youth, for I remain joyless, and open the door one moment that I may see Ramin.”

The nurse replied :

“I cannot always do wickedness⁶ and perjury.⁷ The sovereign Shahinshah went hence yesterday evening, and entreated me so much on oath, as if it had been his last will.⁸ | How can I break my oath to him to-night? How can I open the door sealed by him, or how could I stand before his wrath? If I had a hundred thousand men arrayed, how could I be fortified against him? He himself sought from me faithfulness to him, and now how can I leave his service or break mine oath to him? Think no more that I shall abandon Shahinshah. He is still staying at the city

¹ *Damigruzna.*

² *Toilo*—hobble, rope for horses’ feet.

³ *Sakhe*, 207.

⁴ *Almasi*, 192.

⁵ *Piri*, 223.

⁶ *Avatzoba*. Cf. *catzoba*, 208.

⁷ *Uzenaroba*, 217.

⁸ *Anderdzi*; *anderdzobitha*, 81.

gates ; he is not even distant one day's journey from us. God knows I think this : that he will not stay there even this night, but will come hither. I dare not and ought not to sin so greatly against him. I fear that from ill-doing ill will befall us. It is said by some wise man or other that evil unexpectedly overtakes the evildoer."

When the nurse had spoken words of this sort, and made her hopeless, she said :

" Moon-faced soul, now go back to bed. Sin not against Shahinshah ; be patient this one night. Endure, and then thou shalt have joy a long time from patience. I fear much, by thy sun, that Moabad will come this night unexpectedly, and that he will do thee some harm. Listen to me now, and blind the devil's eye this night."

The nurse went away. Vis grew desperate. Piteously she walked up and down in the room ; she beat her heart with her fist, and sought a means and way to see Ramin. But she could find no window¹ open, nor was there any way to go to the roof. Passion incapable of endurance seized upon her, and made her heart boil with love. She bethought herself, and found this as a means : that where 222 the curtain hung in the room, one fringe² | was bound with a strong rope on the rock. She traversed that rope bare³-footed, like a rope-walker,⁴ for she was powerless to remain. When love overcomes⁵ a man, the matter passes all measure. He does not spare himself, just as she did not. When she walked down the rope she came like a bird on the roof. The wind blew off her veil,⁶ tore the necklace from her neck, her head-covering⁷ was left in the room. Whatever earrings she had in her ears, some were shattered⁸ and some fell out. She remained on the roof, naked and bare-footed.³ She sought a way thence down to the garden. Save this she could find no means : to tie her veil⁹ to the bough of some branching tree, and fix it

¹ *Sarcumeli* ; *sarcmeli*, 217.

² *Tsveri*, R., 1286.

³ *Ukhamuri*, 255—? connected with *khami*, R., 1195.

⁴ *Mashait'hi*, R., 119, 1870.

⁵ *Dasdcharbdes*.

⁶ *Saburavi*, R., 1126.

⁷ *Ialkani*.

⁸ *Daeletsa*, 202.

⁹ *Zetsari*, 150.

there, and throw herself down thence. Whatever clothing she had on all caught on the nails¹ and was torn.² Thence she went down into the vineyard. Although the place was soft, both her feet were sore and torn. Where she fell down from that place she rose up completely naked and bruised. Until midnight she wandered in the garden seeking her lover. Tears flowed from her eyes and blood from her feet.

Sighing, she murmured at her luck, and said: "Where shall I seek the fair one, my heart's joy, or where shall I find my beloved flower?" Then she said:

"O Fate,³ if any heartless one has thy pity, I am one worthy of pity. Thou wilt not be tired, and thy feet will not ache like mine. Roam about in these gardens and seek two kinds⁴ of narcissus⁵: one soulless, and one driven out of patience for my soul. Hidden from me, see if thou canst find anywhere such a man who has turned many like me from knowledge. One who has a thousand | shelters is 228 become shelterless and disgraced, has made a prey⁶ of a thousand hearts, and burns with fire. Thou seest my state, how far gone I am for love of him and in the search for him. Heart-sore, sad, lacking patience, and levelled by a thousand mischances, dusty I wander for love of him. O zephyr,⁷ tell him on whose face is united every beauty not to hide, to wake! Waft me musk from him that I may smell it, and from me carry to him amber and anoint the hyacinth⁸ therewith. Tell him from me: 'O blossoming garden, joyous and beautiful from head to foot, sun, ravisher of my heart, lord of all races⁹ in beauty! Why dost thou burn me who am possessed, and make me to roam on so dark a night? I have never enjoyed thy love as I wished; I have never rested with thee in security.¹⁰ I am abandoned to my unhappy fate. Every human being sleeps, and I only wake. If I am of the race⁹ of man, why

¹ *Lusmari*, 74. ² *Mukasari*—leg of pair of drawers (Saba Lexicon).

³ *Sve.*

⁴ *Orp'herni*—? double, two-coloured.

⁵ *Nargisi*, 178.

⁶ *Iavar*, 218.

⁷ *Niavi*, 217. R.

⁸ *Zumbuli*, 197, 225.

⁹ *Tomi*.

¹⁰ *Mordchmith*, 215.

have God and my luck dealt thus mercilessly with me, for I am like none other of the race of man, and I rejoice in despair. Did not my mother herself bear me without a heart and luckless ! and did not my mother curse me, saying : " Whatever thou seekest shall be far from thee." Now thou, my desired one, art far from me, and if I have no hope of seeing thee, there will remain in my heart the poisoned point¹ of an arrow instead of thy face.¹ And if I smell the musk of Thibet,² it seems to me the dirt of the street.³ Thou art my scent, and not musk and amber. Thou art my balsam and immortality. My heart and liver
 224 are bitten by the serpent of separation from thee. | My wounded soul is come up to my mouth, and the balm and antidote⁴ of my poison is thy lip, and the sun of my fate is thy face. Where art thou ? Why dost thou not appear to me ? Alas ! my luckless fate, why should I become still more weary this night ? I am pitiable even to mine enemies by reason of my torture and unrest.⁵ Thou being thus, how can I be patient ?" Then she began to entreat⁶ the moon to rise. She said : " O moon ! I adjure thee by that God by Whom thou art created to give light and joy to all. Rise ! it is time for thee to rise ! My life⁷ is ready to rise (take its flight). Lift thy rays⁸ above the mountain ; look what burdens⁹ of woe in mountains lie on my heart. Fate and the night are like rusty iron, and the darkness has made me more impious than Fate. I have no heart left, and I have not found anywhere the ravisher of my heart. I beseech thee, O moon ! Have pity on two who have become mad for each other on account of the absence of each other. Be our guide ;¹⁰ have mercy on us,

¹ *Piri*, 220—play upon words. *Piri*—face, point.

² *T'humbut'huri*, 284. *T'habit'h*, 26.

³ *Ubani*—quarter of a town. R., 465.

⁴ *T'heriaqi* (Greek)—treacle.

⁵ *Sdja-mousveneblobat'hat'huis*, is probably the longest word in the book.

⁶ *Mudara*.

⁷ *Sulni*, 101.

⁸ *Shuki*, R., 394, 1135, 1163, 1322.

⁹ *Tvirt'hi*, R., 1086.

¹⁰ *Culaoz* (var., *qulaoz*), R., *qulauz*, 955.

take pity on us. In separation from you two moons the air¹ must needs be dark, and I can have no light in mine eyes, nor vision, for the seat of one is high heaven, and of the second a throne and a saddle."

During this discourse the hour of midnight came, and the moon rose bright, darkness disappeared from the heavens, and grief left Vis's heart. Ramin, weary of grief and of wandering to and fro, had fallen asleep weeping among the roses and lilies,² and his beloved found him there sleeping. Ramin's heart perceived her, | he looked 225 up. When he saw her he leaped up; they embraced. The sun and moon were united,³ musk and amber were mixed;⁴ the rose, the hyacinth,⁵ and the narcissus⁶ mingled. The night was made light with their two faces like the day; by reason of the fulfilment of their desires they remembered not their griefs. The birds on the branches, the nightingales⁷ on the rose in discourse praised the inexhaustibleness of their love. In the garden the flowers smiled because of their joy. The rose asked from them perfume, and the narcissus⁶ attractiveness.⁸

Thereupon Fate and their ill-luck again made known their secret.

¹ *Aeri*, 128.

² *Sosani*, 197.

³ Cf. 194. R., 1896, 1897.

⁴ *Sheizilnes*.

⁵ *Sumbuli*, 223.

⁶ *Nargisi*, 222.

⁷ *Iadoni*, 190.

⁸ *Sandomoba* (?). Cf. Ch. Dict.

MOABAD LEARNS OF THE MEETING OF VIS AND RAMIN

FATE with the sickle of woe reaped¹ the crop of joy. Never expect from it a perfected deed, for every man and (creature) come into the world is abused by it.

When Moabad learned the news about Ramin, and that he was no longer there with him, he perceived the cause of his going. His enmity towards them was renewed. He thought: "How long can I bear so much disregard from them? How long shall I continue in this wrath? As long as a man shall be found on the earth, so long will this my story endure to my shame. I am become a reproach and a byword.² Though Vis be indeed a sun of heaven, and desirable to think on as Paradise to those who pray, even so much to me is she a plague and a shame. She is of no worth. Although her lips were immortality-giving to me, yet they are poison;³ and if her body be desired of men like water, for me it is intolerable as death. Of what use is Vis to me save to injure my soul!"

"PARABLE (*Araci*): It is equally useful for me to advise⁴ Vis and to wash an unbaked brick.⁵ To trust them and to eat gall for the sake of experience are alike.

"I have sought guidance⁶ from a deceiver,⁷ and vigilance⁸ from a blind man, and I have added grief to grief.

227 Again I have tried the tried. | Why should I confide in Vis's love for me, or why should I seek from her nurse fidelity to me and care⁹ of her? I have sealed the doors,

¹ *Momco*, 238.

² *Saaracod*, 239.

³ *Shkhami*.

⁴ *Shegoneba*, 229.

⁵ *Alizi*.

⁶ *Qolauzoba*, R., 1350.

⁷ *Matzt'huri*.

⁸ *Gushagoba*.

⁹ *Shenakhva*.

I have entrusted the seal of them to the nurse! How stupid I am that I did not count on what they would do!"

Shahinshah was thinking in himself. Sometimes he chose patience, and said to himself that there was enough disgrace already, and that he would not make the matter known;¹ sometimes ill-humour overcame² his mind. He rose, mounted his horse, and straightway went into Marav, and made his way to the gate of the palace.

The nurse laid the seals and keys all before him; the nurse knew nothing of what had happened to Vis. Shahinshah saw all the doors with his seal intact. When he went in he could not find Vis. He sought her everywhere, high and low.³ He said to the nurse:

"What has become of Vis? These doors and windows are all so guarded that not even a bird could get through. What has she done? If she had gone to study with the chief of the wizards,⁴ even then I could not have given her credit for this. Such a pupil would make a thousand wizards look despicable."

When he could not see her, he beat the nurse so much that she became insensible, and there was nought between her and death. In one place they found her (Vis's) head-dress,⁵ in another a fragment of her necklace, in another place rags from her shirt. Somebody or other expressed the opinion that she might have gone along the rope, like a rope-dancer,⁶ thence on to the roof, and then had jumped down into the garden. Shahinshah with many candles and torches⁷ went from the court into the garden. Vis from afar saw the light of the torches, her soul parted from her body for fear. She was afraid for Ramin's sake, and said:

| "Arise! Shahinshah is undoubtedly come. Go thou 228 away hastily: it is not unworthy to be wary of a foe. Now Moabad is coming to kill me. Let what will befall me, for

¹ *Gaamzhghavneb.*

² *Moeris (moreva),* 239.

³ *Satzkhadosa da samalavsa shigan.*

⁴ *Artvazi.*

⁵ *Ialkani,* 229.

⁶ *Mushait'hi,* 222. R., 119, 1870.

⁷ *Mashkhali*—cresset (Arabic).

me he is like a hungry lion ravening for a doe.¹ God grant thee peace, and whatever grief and sore plight He has decreed for thee, may it light on me instead. Go, save thyself. I shall stay here, waiting to be swept away by the flood of ill-luck. I have been born on the earth as a byword for misfortune. I have never had the joy of one kiss from thee without a hundred whips² beating me in return from him. I can never eat one date³ without a thorn, nor can I rejoice without woe."

Ramin became as one without power, like (an ox) bound for the slaughter. The strength of his heart and the use of his arms and legs failed him; no glory remained to him save to part from Vis with resolution, and he only longed for death. Nothing else could be done. He rose and fled away so swiftly that eye could not follow him. Escaped from a net, he fell⁴ into a hole.⁵ Thinking of his sorrows because of the absence of Vis, he could not rejoice in his deliverance since Vis was left there. He got down safely without mishap from the high wall, and went away free from mischance.

Vis lay down in that place and feigned to be asleep. She laid her head on her hand; her eyes rained blood from her heart. Shahinshah trod on her, he shouted at 229 her lying down, and shook her by the leg. | Like one unconscious she gave no answer. He sent in all directions horsemen and footmen to seek Ramin, but they could find him nowhere. In that garden there was no creature save the birds. Shahinshah seized Vis by the hair, drew his sword, and said :

"Tell me true by what cunning⁶ thou camest hither. With such care I closed door and window. What has Ramin done to thee that thou canst not keep for one night my command and counsel?⁷ Thou art not a bird; and if thou art a *dev* or a witch, why art thou not kept in by iron? There is no means of keeping thee. Reason is as

¹ *Iremi.*

² *Mat'hrakhhi*, 279.

³ *Khurma.*

⁴ *Chaidchra*, 230.

⁵ *Ormo*, 275.

⁶ *Ilat'hi.*

⁷ *Tsurt ha*, 241.

far from thee as the sky. Fulfilment of thy desire is as near as thy life.¹ Thou art the mistress of a luckless mind; the sight of two eyes and the hearing of two ears are useless to thee.

“PARABLE (*Araci*): Counsel² to thee is as useless as a cooking-pot³ to him who is too ill to eat anything, or a head-dress⁴ to a traveller.

“When I advise and instruct thee, thou art weary of reason. Instead of profit I have borne from thee so many shames and dishonours that each of them seems to me like a hundred. Thou art a devil,⁵ for thou art always afraid of a good name. If from afar thou seest righteousness, thy soul cannot bear it, for it begins to shriek at the sight thereof. Thou piercest the pure heart with a knife and despisest the good. If I call thee a *dev*, thou art pleased with me; if the devil, thou hopest it is a black one. Everything honourable is made shameful by thee, and thou hast broken the fame of every man. I have seen none shameful as thee, and none trustful⁶ as I am. Shame has forsaken me on account of my so great love for thee. To shed thy blood is justifiable,⁷ because thy life is | the 230 cause of woe to many souls. I know no medicine to instruct thee save thy death by this sword.”

He prepared to strike off her head, and she had not so much fear for the sword as grief for the lack of Ramin. Then Zard went to his brother and said :

“Exalted⁸ king, may God multiply your days in gladness! Thou thyself understandest what woe will fall on thee afterwards from slaying her. Thou hast once tried separation from her, and what befell thee? How weary thou becamest of dwelling in the land and of the army on her account! Thou thyself knowest how many tears thou didst shed. Thou wilt not find on the earth another like unto her in beauty⁹ of form, nor is there such an one created by God.

¹ *Sulni*. ² *Shegoneba*, 226. ³ *Kot'hani*—earthenware pot.

⁴ *Ialkani*—? ceremonial head-dress for a woman, 227.

⁵ *Eshma*, 277. ⁶ *Sheudjerebeli*. ⁷ *Alalni* (Arabic).

⁸ *Maghali*. ⁹ *Thualadoba*, 156, 240. R., 1055.

If thou slayest her, know thou wilt regret,¹ and afterwards it will avail thee nought. If the colour (henna) of former days please thee, then dye thy hand with the same now. When she was away from thee I have seen thee then, how thou didst sometimes roam senseless in the plains like a wild goat, and sometimes didst swim in the sea like a fish. There remained not to thee any place where thou didst not see grief while going in quest of her. Now soon hast thou forgotten those woes through which thou didst pass for love of her, and we, thy slaves, rejoice not at all in our life because of our thoughts of you. Now, remember Shahro's honour, Viro's love and service, and thine own oath which thou swarest by God and all His saints.² Break not thine oath, for the breaking of an oath never fails to bring hurt to a man of whatever rank he be. However guilty she was before, now doubtless she is innocent. Thou seest how she

231 lies alone in this garden, and | this is not wonderful. If somebody had been here, he could not have escaped over such high walls. Impute not guilt to the innocent. We found the iron doors closed. If anyone had been here to-night, he could not have hidden himself from us. It is impossible for a man to escape hence. Inquire; surely thou canst make her say something,³ that thou mayst know the truth. Thus thou shalt make her repent. Otherwise, by the death of this innocent thou wilt harm thyself more."

This speech of entreaty⁴ of Zard softened Moabad's heart; he took hold of her hand and led her in. He said to Vis :

"I know thou art neither a *dev* nor an *eshma* (devil). By what witchcraft didst thou come forth, by what means didst thou descend into this garden?"

He made her swear by the power of God, the Creator, and by fire, to speak the truth. Then Vis made answer, and said :

"God is always merciful to me. He never abandons me, and is the Ruler⁵ of my fate. I care nought for thy wrath,

¹ *Chaidchrebi*—fall into (regret), 228, 266.

² Reference to saints—? the addition of the Georgian translator.

³ *Nuthu-ra vit'hra.* ⁴ *Adjit'ha*, 402. R., 17, 270. ⁵ *Mouravi*.

for I consider Him to be mine Aid. Thou always imputest impiety to me, thou oppressest me innocent, thou always bringest me into grief, thou imprisonest me, fetterest me, frownest on me, strikkest me, thou treatest me disrespectfully, and I am continually¹ expecting death from thee. My Creator delivers me from all woes; He saves me, makes me glad, leads me forth, heals me, makes me merry, guards me, preserves me, and magnifies me. Whatever thou dost to me, God comes after thee; thou art fighting against Him, not me. God is the strength of all that are cast down and their supporter. He suffices me | as Consoler and Deliverer. 232
 Last night I, distressed in thy prison, weeping, wounded² in heart, besought God, telling Him what injustices afflicted me from thee; I spoke to Him with tears, and in that same place I fell into a slumber. There came a beautiful angel clad in green garb,³ he led me forth from thy dungeon, and so brought me that not even a hair of me was hurt. Pleasantly I slept, I lay here soft. My wearisome heaviness lay no longer in my heart, and nought hurtful to me oppressed me. All my griefs were changed to joy, all my wishes were fulfilled. When I perceived the noise and light, again my state was turned to woe. I saw thee, I beheld thee standing above me with drawn sword. I know nothing more than this. If thou wilt, believe this; if not—do not. This is what happened to me. As thou wishest, so believe. If thy behaviour to me had not been all unjust, God would not thus have delivered me, nor would a sinner have been sleeping thus."

Shahinshah believed this that Vis had said, he held it⁴ truth, he grieved greatly.⁵ He feared God, he regretted what he had done, he asked forgiveness, he gave Vis and the nurse many⁶ jewels and pearls, gold and stuffs. They were friendly together, they forgot the evil they had done each other, and made merry.—Such is the heart of Adam's race,⁷ that it forgets past grief in joy; neither does the grief

¹ *Niadag.*

² Reading *tsqluli* for *tsqruli*.

³ *Mtsuanosani.*

⁴ *Miap'hera.*

⁵ *Diadi.*

⁶ *Dia*, 238.

⁷ *Tomt'ha.*

of yesterday remain, nor is there expectation of to-morrow's. If thou art merry a thousand years even, like one day, it passes; and if thou art afflicted for a moment, it is to thee 283 as a hundred years. Whether thou rejoicest or | sorrowest, it remains with thee.¹ Be merry, that in thy day thou mayst take² thy share in joy.

¹ (The sorrow) remains with thee (?).

² *Aigho*—pick up.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

MOABAD INVITES SHAHRO AND VIRO AND MAKES A BANQUET

It was the springtime: the day was pleasant; fields, meads, and gardens were like Paradise; the fruitful trees, the flowing streams, and the birds above all sang; the narcissi were like cupbearers, and the violets like drunkards with their bowed heads; the branches with their fruit were like the crown of Noshrevan¹ in beauty; the meads in verdure were emeralds,² and the mountains topaz.³ All the land was filled with flowers, beauty, and fragrance. The world was tender⁴ as a young bride.

Shahinshah sat in his garden, and by his side sat the sun-faced Vis; on the right sat Viro, on the left Shahro, opposite sat Ramin, and in front were seated the court⁵ singing girls.⁶ They sang, they drank, and made merry. There was an assembly⁷ of the magnates. A minstrel⁸ sang a song on the love of Vis and Ramin; whoever understood well perceived the force of what was uttered. It pleased Shahinshah. He said:

“Pleasantly thou hast sung this song. Now sing another song | about the love of Vis and Ramin, and reveal 234 their story.”

When Vis heard this, she gave gifts to the minstrel,⁹ and said:

“Since Shahinshah desires that my story should be revealed, tell what I hide from everybody.”

¹ ? 531 A.D.

² *Zurmukhti*, R., 1845.

³ *Bezhmedi*.

⁴ *Nazoba*—? delicate, 355.

⁵ *Khasi*, R., 44, 163, 174, 326, 456, 1183, 1414.

⁶ *Mutribi*.

⁷ *Djalaboba*, R., 713, 990.

⁸ *Mgosani*.

The minstrel sang this song : "I saw a great tree, its head reaching to heaven ; under its shade lay a land which shone like the sun. Beneath flowed a fair stream, and around¹ bloomed violets and roses, hyacinths² and lilies.³ Near it was a fat bullock,⁴ sometimes it browsed on the grass.⁵ May that spring ever be an inexhaustible stream, the grass ever be green, the bullock be fat and browsing, the tree fruitful!" She called Shahinshah a tree, Vis a spring, and the bold⁶ bullock was Ramin. When Moabad thoroughly understood the interpretation of this song, he leaped up from his throne and seized Ramin by the hair, unsheathed his knife,⁷ and said :

"Swear to me at once that thou wilt no longer possess Vis's love and wilt never touch⁸ her again, otherwise I shall at once strike off thy head from thy body, since my body because of thy shame wanders headless."

Ramin thus swore solemnly⁹ by their oaths,—first by God, then by fire, sun, and moon, that : "As long as I live I will neither cease nor repose from seeking her. All my days I will succour her, I will not abandon her thus. To thee the sun of heaven seems an object of adoration,¹⁰ to me Vis's face. She is my soul, and it cannot be that a man of 235 his own will should sacrifice his life. | If thou desirest, slay me,¹¹ and if thou desirest, leave me (alive). I cannot forsake her love."

When Shahinshah heard this, he was exceedingly angry, and began to insult him. He put him down, prepared to cut off his head, and in that part where such sore love afflicts him to cut him with a knife. When Ramin saw he had resolved to slay him, he seized Moabad with both hands, snatched the knife from his hand, and went away.

Moabad was drunk, and after this went away from the

¹ *Midamo.*

² *Sumbuli.*

³ *Sosani*, 197, 354.

⁴ *Mozveri.*

⁵ *Sat'hibi.*

⁶ *Laghi*, 241.

⁷ *Dana.*

⁸ *Daecaro (dacrva)*—bind, stick.

⁹ *Mtcitzed.*

¹⁰ *Salotzavad.*

¹¹ *Momcal*, R., 247, etc.

wassail and fell asleep. In the morning Moabad no longer remembered what had happened, knowledge of all, save love and drunkenness, had fled. In drunkenness it can be perceived what character¹ a man has. If Moabad had not had these two vices,¹ evil would not have befallen him.

¹ *Zne*—? this twofold character.

BEGO'S GOOD COUNSEL TO RAMIN

NEXT day all his friends came to see Ramin and pay their court. They saw him so melancholy that they asked him what ailed him, and he told them the reason. There was then in Khuarasan a man wise above all men, a master¹ of eloquence and of good understanding, and his name was Bego. There was none there like unto him for prudence. In season and out of season he went to Ramin and watered Ramin's heart with the waters of advice. He said: "This kingdom will be thine—all Khuarasan, Eraq, and whatever thy soul wishes. All thy desire will be fulfilled, and thou shalt be sovereign of all the land."

On that day on which Moabad was angered, in the morning he (Bego) said: "Thou art lord of all Aran² and T'hurket'h,³ and a young⁴ man, royal also in race; and what desirest thou better than these two that thou hast? Thy body cries out before God that thou afflictest it so much. In this fleeting world why dost thou pursue anything save joy? Since the decree of God may not be averted, we cannot hide ourselves from grief. Thus we want not useless melancholy and grieving."

Ramin said:

237 "Thou speakest as befits thy wisdom. But | when the planet does so much that is not desired, how can the heart of man endure? Since it is neither iron nor a boulder,⁵ how much can one body bear, and how long can one heart suffer?"

¹ *Sapatrono*, 242, 354.

² Aran, 240.

³ T'hurket'h, 257

⁴ *Qma.*

⁵ *Sipi kua*—? boulder.

“PARABLE (*Araci*): God’s providence rains for all; but I alone am taken away by the shower. There comes not one day to me when my liver is not wounded. If for one moment my desire be fulfilled, in the same (moment) the net is spread to ensnare me. When Fate casts roses on my head, each leaf pierces my eye with a thorn. I never drink a glass of wine by my will but afterwards I drink the same measure of gall.

“If thou wert held in such a state, who would see thee merry? Since only yesterday Moabad chanced upon me, and in the presence of Vis I retired with dishonour, how can I be advised by anyone? I should only entreat my fate, that I may die and be delivered from my plight.”

He told in detail what had happened then, and said:

“How canst thou expect joy from me since all this has befallen me? Such disgrace to me before Vis, and being dragged about so much, insulted, and the continual weeping of bloody tears from mine eyes, the bitterness of my state, (all these) make me desire death. I can endure every misfortune, but dishonour I cannot bear.”

Bego ventured to remark:

“O bewailer of thy Fate, thou art a lion. Why dost thou complain of jackals?¹ Thy Fate will aid thee in the end. | But how long will this humour afflict thee? As 238 long as passion pleases thee, so long thy body will continually be a bearer² of grief. Why dost thou give thy heart to a lover if thou canst not bear misfortune and dishonour? Dost thou not know that when thou sowest passion from it thou reapest³ dishonour? Whoever sows and gathers the rose, the thorn will prick his hand. Thou in love art like a merchant: sometimes loss befalls thee, and sometimes gain. Think not that gain can fall to thy share without loss, or fire without smoke. Whoever sows seed, until the thrashing⁴ he is in trouble about it. Thou hast sown the seed of love in thy heart, and thou desirest from it a harvest⁵ like Vis; but before that thou shalt see

¹ *Turat'hagan.*

² *Meidavi*—porter, R., 1040.

³ *Moimci*, 226.

⁴ *Galetsva.*

⁵ *Momea.*

a deal¹ of woe. A thousand times I have told thee not to distress thy body and soul in a vain² deed. Desire³ is like a raging⁴ sea, to go into which is not the act of a prudent⁵ man. Love that has entered into the heart and fire upon the eyes are equally endurable. Whether thou wilt or no, there is no resource save patience; and if not, thou shalt see a deal¹ of woe. If thou wilt, thy body will be the abode of grief.⁶ Thou art bound on account of an angry elephant,⁷ and combatest⁸ an enraged lion. Boldness⁹ aids thee, and I know not how the matter will end. Thou sittest without a boat¹⁰ in the sea. In it thou seekest a precious gem, and hast no expectation of coming out in safety. Thou art taken by that dragon¹¹ from whom neither friend nor foe can deliver. And if for one day he is so angry that he would slay thee, I fear for thee, and I know not what thy fate¹² will be. Thou hast reared a 239 house | in the bed of a stream, thou hast fallen asleep drunk. Surely a flood¹³ may come upon thee unawares, and the stream may carry away thee and thy house. More than a hundred times thou hast been bound in a net, but by thy Fate thou hast been aided and delivered. But woe if thou be once bound in such a way that by no means thou canst be delivered, being lost, disgraced in vain. That disgrace is much¹ worse than the other, for if thou pourest forth thine own blood, in this world every man will reproach thee, and in yonder world thou shalt be punished in hell for ever. Why dost thou torture thy soul more than this? If thou wilt hearken to me¹⁴ and choose patience, instead of much woe, thou shalt find advantage. There is no such bravery⁹ and manliness¹⁵ as patience, and especially when desire is put away. Then, if thou wilt use manliness and patience, thou shalt wipe the rust from thy heart. There is no remedy for a passion save to love

¹ *Dia*, 232, 238, 239. ² *Tzudi*. ³ *Gulis neba*. ⁴ *Aghelvcbuli*.

⁵ *Metznieri*; for this sentiment cf. 246. ⁶ *Tsqena*.

⁷ *Pilo*, 344. ⁸ *Eomvi*. ⁹ *Dchabucoba*. ¹⁰ *Unavo*.

¹¹ *Veshapi*. ¹² *Satsut'ho*. ¹³ *Rghvnoba*.

¹⁴ *Chemi*. ¹⁵ *Mamatzoba*.

another. Nothing save this will relieve a man's heart. If thou wilt endure for one year, thou shalt forget the lack of her,¹ so as if thou hadst never seen her at all. When passion overcomes² a man, there is no remedy like absence, for love has eyes. Whoever is absent from the eyes is absent from the heart too. Manifold difficult matters meet man, but by his reason, prudence, counsel, and also by struggling, he finds a means. One misfortune oppresses thee, and thou knowest not a means against it, nor (acceptest) advice. Thou art despised,³ and become a byword.⁴ Thy brother has become thy foe. Great and small speak thy shame. When first | they sit down to drink they begin 240 to insult thee, and call thee for a name 'the *ci-devant* brave.'⁵ Even though Vis be a sun, yet how can Ramin do dishonour to his brother?

"PARABLE (*Araci*): When a man blemishes⁶ his race, the water even of a hundred seas cannot cleanse it. As that of an ill-doer his name remains to all eternity; advantage does not remain to such a man. A good friend to an instructed man is better than a territory,⁷ and a true heart than a precious jewel.

"Thou hast fulfilled thy desire so long a time with Vis, and hast eaten the fruit from the branch of love. If thou art near her even a thousand years what more canst thou do? She is neither a sun in light nor a graven image⁸ in beauty. Thou wilt find in the land many attractive⁹ like Vis, and for such a wench why hast thou in the past¹⁰ exhausted thy youth? If thou settest thy heart upon some other one, thou wilt no longer remember Vis at all. The star pleased thee because thou hadst never seen the moon. Chase love from thine erring¹¹ heart. Try!¹² Beginning from India—Chin, Barbar, Greece, Aran unto Khuarasan thou hast in power¹³ from thy brother—canst

¹ *Umisoba.*

² *Moerios*, 227.

³ *Gabedit'hebulkhar.*

⁴ *Saaracod*, 228.

⁵ *Nadjomardi.*

⁷ *Kveqana.*

⁶ *Daisvaros—suari* (*Jeremiah xxix. 17*).

⁹ *T'hvalad*, 230.

¹⁰ *Ucana.*

⁸ *But'hi—idol*, 259.

¹² *Gamoitzade t'havi.*

¹³ *Mordchmit'h.*

¹¹ *Momtzdari.*

thou not find another queen like Vis? Seek in the land until thou find one even fairer than she. Let thy days flow by in joy and security. How long, how long wilt thou distress thyself? Behold, now is come the time that thou shalt be ashamed, that thou shalt seek honour from thy brother and lack of reproach from the hosts. Behold the good time, for thou shalt rejoice in thy youth; thou shalt make thy friends to rejoice; thou shalt oppress thy foes; thou shalt seek a name in bravery. It is a time when thou shouldst weigh evil and good. Other monarchs, thy peers,
 241 seek royalty and majesty, | and thou art always seeking Vis and the nurse. Thou hast reft thyself of honour.¹ How long will thine evil conduct last? The time of singing and sporting² is gone from thee. How long will thy steed run in the lists of pleasure?² What is this devil that has made thee such a coward,³ that thou art become shameful, and hast forsaken God's service for hers? I fear for thee in the end, lest thou make thy foes to rejoice over thee. If thou wilt hearken to me, thy servant,⁴ thou shalt be delivered from so much insult and disgrace.⁵ Thy grief will be turned to joy, and mischance to the favour of God. And if thou art not satiated with the state thou art in, let it be as if I had not spoken, and thou hadst not hearkened. When that comes upon thee, thou shalt be caught⁶ in the midst, and we shall remain on the brink.⁷ No trouble comes upon the onlooker save the sight thereof. I earnestly beg to be allowed to say this. I, according to such wisdom as I have, have spoken. Do thou even as thou wishest."

When Ramin heard this discourse and counsel⁸ from Bego, in his lack of courage⁹ he became like a loaded¹⁰ ass buried in the mire, and was powerless. Sometimes he became yellow like saffron,¹¹ sometimes he was melancholy. Thus he spoke to Bego:

¹ *Piris tsqali*—water of the face; Persian, *ab ru*.

² *Laghoba*, 234.

³ *Dzabuni*, 267.

⁴ *Mona*.

⁵ *Bedit'hoba*.

⁶ *Daepqrobi*.

⁷ *Napiri*—bank of river.

⁸ *Shegoneba*.

⁹ *Uguloba*.

¹⁰ *Mocart'huli*? *cart'hi*, calf of the leg.

¹¹ *Zap'hroni*, 280. Cf. *zap'hra*, 280.

"I know that thou hast spoken thus for my good. My ignorant¹ heart is wounded, and because of this it struggles in me. Now, I will hearken to thy pleasant counsel,² and I will follow thy good advice.³ I will rend from my heart that wretched one, and henceforth my heart shall no longer be a seeker after desire, nor my cheeks paths for the canal⁴ of my tears. To-morrow I shall turn my face from the lands of Eraq and Mah, and where there are lovers I shall not approach willingly. | I shall not admit to my heart 242 love for anybody, and shall follow after no such deed that I shall remain shamed for ever."

¹ *Umetzari.*

² *P'handi.*

³ *Tsur'ha*, 229, 242.

⁴ *Ru*, 194, 276.

CHAPTER XL

SHAH MOABAD'S ADVICE,¹ INSTRUCTION,² AND COMMAND³ TO VIS

At the very time when Bego was advising Ramin, it pleased Moabad also to instruct⁴ Vis. He counselled her with pleasant and soft⁵ words. Thus he spoke :

“ O fair mistress,⁶ my life-giver ! Thou thyself knowest how much trouble I have seen for thy sake, what has befallen me through love for thee, and how many times my heart has been pained by thee. By thine evil behaviour my grief has been prolonged, and thou hast made me a byword. There is no beauty which thou hast not, and there is no greatness which I have not. There is on the earth no greater monarch than I. I shall be king of kings, and thou queen of beauties ; come, let us be together. Keep not thy heart estranged. As long as we exist let us be friends one of the other, let us take a share of love. Be thou lady of lands, towns, armies, treasures, and courts ; it suffices me to have but the name of royalty, be thou the doer of 243 every deed else. Whatever thou desirest, | let it be done ; wherever there is a fair spot, sport, rejoice, give gifts, and manage.⁷ Whatever I have, all is thine ; thou art worthy of even a hundred thousand times as much. My vezirs are thine, my scribes also are thine. Whatever thou wishest, command, and let it be done. Royalty and greatness beseem thee and not me ; thus let me be thy lover, doing thy beloved will and following thy desires. Besides, who can there be on the earth who would not be thy slave,

¹ *Tsur'thna.*

² *Shegoneba.*

³ *Mtzneba.*

⁴ *Tsur'tha,* 241.

⁵ *Lbili.*

⁶ *Patroni,* 236, 354.

⁷ *Iurvodi*—? take pains, 446.

obedient to thy command? Listen to my counsel, and be no longer as unstable¹ as a walnut on a dome.² I wish thee well and teach thee good in all. I am not vicious³-hearted like thee, that hast one thing in thy heart and speakest another with thy tongue. My soul is a desirer of righteousness, my tongue a speaker of truth. My heart is a continual seeker for love, my tongue a speaker of peace. Act thou also truthfully. Be not to me double-tongued and treacherous-hearted. If thou wilt hearken to this my saying, change this hateful conduct and thy nature; obey me. I shall make thee so desirable that great sovereigns shall do homage to the foundations of thy palace for fear⁴ of thee. And if thou shalt behave so (as formerly), I shall become such an enemy to thee that there could be none more hostile. Do not so, O moon; make me to be honoured. Have a care of mine enmity, for I am more terrible even than wild beasts. Thou shalt find my love preferable to my hate. Be ashamed for the honour of Shahro; think on thy peerless race; look on the goodness of thy brother, for they are continually shamed and blackened in the face because of thee. If thou hadst shame before God, Shahro, and Viro, | thou wouldest act as 244 is befitting, and wouldest also do me honour. But since thou hast no care for such a parent as Shahro, nor regard for such a brother as Viro, why shouldst thou make me rejoice? Or how can I expect to tame thee to me, though my pomp⁵ and greatness reach even unto heaven? But now tell me truly, without deceit. I adjure thee by God to tell me what thou hast in thy heart for me: friendship or enmity? I can no longer endure life in this state; thou also art wearied of this thy nature. Receive advice from me at last, and if thou takest it, I have had enough of counselling. In thy deeds let my secret counsel be made manifest;⁶ I can bear this no longer, and will no longer entreat thee."

By the decree of God, Vis's stony heart softened like wax. While he was still speaking she arose, and thus answered:

¹ *Daukaravi*—which cannot be fixed.

² *Gumbathi*, 188.

³ *Manciani*.

⁴ *Zari*—terror.

⁵ *Zari*

⁶ *Gamzhghavneba*.

"O exalted¹ monarch, in height thou reachest unto heaven, and in lowliness unto the earth; thou hast a generous heart; thy hand—the giver of precious jewels; and thine intelligence—in prudence unattainable by others. God has brought thee into such a plight that other sovereigns could not even imagine it. What thou hast done has passed over all, like the sun. May God do to you according to your desires, and may your commands be fulfilled. You, too, know that his planet turns upon a man from moment to moment with another *tooth*² (? of a wheel), and even with (his) birth it will be born. We men cannot flee from the foreordained decree of God and the planet, nowhere 245 can we be hidden save by the will of God Himself. | All is of a truth ordained by Him, whatever befalls anybody till the day of death. Even such as I am, I have been built up by God. I am a pure nature, although thou hast been born fortunate by God, and I, it seems, to be thus. I am innocent in this, that I have never desired for myself (anything) evil which in time has not been repaid to me. I desire not for myself such mischances; so much misfortune was not pleasant for me. Neither did I desire that so many woes should befall me from love, and that my foes should know its secret. Neither do I like this for myself, that whenever I expect joy it is turned to grief for me. From birth I have grown up in grief! What is my resource, since my heart in such things was forestalled by my destiny?³ Even as my planet struggles with my soul so I am, and I myself am so weary, that I even long to be eaten up by a lion. My fate is like that of an Abyssinian⁴ labourer burned up by the sun, and my patience like one carried away captive by the Kadjis.⁵ With my nails I have torn the curtain of shame from my heart, and with my teeth I have cut the thread⁶ of my life. Henceforth, know Shah Moabad, I desire no longer soul and heart to be thine oppressor. From them I have been in grief. My heart has never rejoiced, nor has my soul ever reposed in my body. My state has been invariably⁷ one of turmoil. Hitherto it

¹ *Maghali*. ² *Cbilad*; var., *qalibad*—a form (calibre), 257. ³ *Sve*.

⁴ *Abashi*—Abyssinian. ⁵ *Kadji*, 284. ⁶ *Mcedi*. ⁷ *Ert'hsakhe*.

seems as if my luck had been asleep. Now I am no longer a seeker from anyone of such love, by which eternal shame should befall me, or a merciful and mighty lord like thee should become merciless and inimical to me. Why, indeed, should I desire so hard a love by which so great shame will come upon me? Why should I desire such love by which so much reproach and dishonour will overtake 246 me, and make me remain a byword in the land? Now the door of my dark heart is opened for me, I have found the true way, I perceive with mine eyes, I am become acquainted with understanding and knowledge. Now I have chased away passion. Henceforth I shall understand that from my nature harm has come upon me, and from my youth, in yonder world and this world, I have done an ill deed. Passion is like a deep sea, and entrance thereinto is not the rule of the wise.¹ If I live out all my days, I do not think that I shall any more seek to see his² face again; and if I had the days of a thousand Methuselahs,³ I by no means think that in all of them I should pass even one day in peace of mind. Why should I, alas! struggle with my pitiable soul? Why, innocent, pour out my blood? Why have I not hearkened to your commandment? Wherefore have I not sought peace for myself? But henceforth, whatever thou seest of sin and ill conduct towards thee, whatever thou desirest, I have no words against that wrath (of thine). If he be even a lion, Ramin henceforth cannot overcome me; if he become the wind even, he cannot smell my scent, he cannot blow in my presence. And now, what I promise thee, I will never break this pact and promise.⁴ If thou desirest me as a handmaiden and a servant, from this day forth I am obedient unto thee. Turn thy heart once more towards me, and I will serve thee even as thou thyself wishest. Now is confirmed in me the soul of truth."

Shahinshah kissed her mouth and eyes, they found comfort in each other, they wiped away from each other the rust of suspicion and hatred.

¹ Cf., 238, Bego's advice to Ramin.

² Misi—? its (passion's).

³ Mat'husala.

⁴ Paemani da piri; upirulo, 265.

VIS AND RAMIN PART IN ANGER

As when it is cloudy and the air is darkened, and the earth is agitated by a swift wind, so it is when Fate divides lovers. Beforehand it (Fate) sets to work treacherously; it seeks a cause, and makes it evident. When one has a fever, first the mouth is hot. When Ramin became weary of the continual sight of misfortune, and satiated of following after Vis day and night, of being bound every moment in a net, and of the reproaches of all men—Bego's discourse also having settled in his heart—he sent a man to Shahinshah and made the following announcement:

“The air of these parts suits me not. I am even for the most part unwell. If thy majesty commands, and if I am found worthy of the honour, I will go to Eraq and serve as chief of the hosts there. Be gracious to me. Whatsoever the service may be, I will perform it. When you command me, I shall certainly come before you with speed. Let me by your favour be delivered from this sickness and sadness. I would rejoice continually at the chase on the mountain and in the plain, sometimes with panthers, sometimes with hawks and dogs. I will follow every kind of game. My horses are become wild, and this six months I have not used mine armour by reason of home-keeping. Now let me go away, and whenever you command I shall be before you as your slave.”

248 | When Shahinshah was informed of this he listened and rejoiced. He fulfilled Ramin's request. He gave him Re, Gurgan, Koistan, Hamian, and all Eraq. He clad him (in a robe of honour), and gave him a roving commission. He

took his leave, and caused the tents to be pitched outside (the city). He secretly despatched one of his household to Vis, who on hearing of this seemed scarcely to have life left. Her heart shrank, and she began to sigh from her heart.¹

Ramin went on foot to take leave of Vis. He was all ready, and there was nothing left for him to do but to mount. Vis sat on the throne. He went in and sat down on the throne by her side. Vis waved her hand, and said :

“Rise! Sit not on the king’s throne. A slave should beware of sitting in his master’s place. It is still early for thee to seek this throne, by which thou art seduced. This is mere folly.”

Ramin was grieved. Greatly frowning he rose and moved away. He cursed his birth, and repented him of all the griefs he had seen for Vis’s sake. Thus he spoke in his heart :

“Oh, now I have seen of myself what thing Vis has in her heart concerning me ; what she has said to me in the last hour of parting. Let none seek pity from a woman ; let none sow roses in a salty waste. Their love is like an ass’s tail, it cannot be lengthened in measure. For a long time I was measuring an ass’s tail, and following the track of a *dev*. Now, thanks to God ! mine eyes see, and my heart is whole. I distinguish between glory and shame. Why have I hitherto wasted my youth in vain ? Why have I dissipated life and my days ? Alas ! for those past | days and hours. Alas ! for that heart of mine, which 249 expected love ! For what reason have I hitherto lacked joy in my youth, since at last I remain abandoned by her ? It is better for a man to take his life with his own hands than to hearken to such words. Still, I have heard such cool words at a good time, for they have fortified my heart. Well is it that my heart is estranged from her. But since I have set my heart upon separating from her, what matters it how many ill words I hear from her ? If a house be

¹ Punctuation of text altered.

unlucky, the sooner it is pulled down the better. God has given me a reason for going away. At last a compensation for my woe has appeared. Although I were most wise, I would have bought such words at the price of a thousand precious jewels. Now God has let me hear them free of charge. O heart, be confident and flee from this difficulty. Flee, O heart, from the mischance of Fate. Flee, O heart, from the forgotten shame. Flee; spend thy blood no longer on anyone. Be confident and beware. For if thou art not prudent now, when indeed wilt thou be prudent?" Ramin was in this meditation, and his heart seemed to him to be filled up with pepper.¹

When Vis saw Ramin frowning thus, she began to reproach herself, and say: "Why have I grieved him by my impatience?" Her heart was cut by a sword on account of his grief. Then she caused a hundred and thirty bundles to be brought, in each of which were tied thirty pieces of brocade, each gold-embroidered, Chinese, Bagdad cloth of gold, and each better than the other. She entrusted them to Ramin's treasurer. She clothed Ramin himself in many lovely garments, wedding coats and hats 250 and turbans. | Then she asked pardon for those words, and said :

"It is not thus that thou didst swear to me thou wouldst not abandon me alive nor leave me. Now, why dost thou this?"

He told her the reason why he was doing it, and why he was going away. Then they took each other's hands and went away alone into the orchard and embraced. From their faces the orchard bloomed, and from their hair the breeze was scented. Sometimes they rejoiced at being together, and sometimes they wept at parting. Vis the fair-faced shed blood from her eyes, her cheeks were the colour of gold. From her eyes streams of a thousand clouds poured forth, and from one soul a thousand kinds of grief came forth. She scratched her face and breast, and said :

¹ *Pilpili.*

"O beloved friend, why dost thou darken my light by going away? Didst thou not swear to me that first day? Now, since then, what time has passed that thou art thus sated of being near me? How is this thusness of the heart? This is the custom of you men that you discover (your) heart to a man, and in the showing of the heart you wound that same heart. Then you fortify your heart. Strength of heart is fitting in battle, not in deceiving a friend. How dost thou not appear blameworthy before God? I am that same Vis, sun-like, fair-faced, musk-haired, cypress-formed. Thou hast never seen me other than affectionate to thee that thou shouldst chase love for me from thy heart. If thou hast found some new lover, do not cast down into the sea my old love, and do not forsake me. Ramin, make not my foes to rejoice. Do not this. | I know thou wilt soon return and repent if thou 251 uprootest love. It (love) is not a harpstring that it may be knotted again. Thou wilt remember this day. When thou beginnest to sigh and to put thy face on the earth before me, after thy fashion, and thus to entreat me, saying thou canst not bear to be without me, then repentance will not avail thee when thou seekest to see me and canst not find me. Now, thou art satiated of me in thy haughtiness and stupidity, and then thou shalt be wretched. Then thou shalt see what I shall do to thee. Do not imagine that I shall take good or evil without making due return. Then thou shalt be tender to me and humour me."

Ramin spoke thus in reply:

"God knows my heart, and thou, too, knowest that I cannot bear a moment without thee. But I fear, and am avoiding thy foes. All mankind are our enemies; so even my shirts have become inimical to me. Even mice overcome me like panthers, and fishes affright me like dragons. The sun flashes on my dishonour, the cloud rains on my wretchedness. So much reproach do I hear from every man that I am made to look on hell with mine own eyes. For this reason I am estranged from my familiars, and I

fear my friends like foes and avengers of blood. From whose hand soever I drank water, I fear poison. I have heard such things from Shahinshah that I fear he will treacherously compass my death; and if he killed me, then I were neither thine nor mine. Thus I have preferred that my heart should be separated from thee, and wherever I go I shall remain alive. I desire to live rather than to die, and be separated eternally from a lover like thee. What is more pleasant than this, that I should remain alive, and a soul like thine be near me? Now, let us be 252 patient. This year let us | be separate, and then all my days we shall live together secure. I have heard that night is pregnant;¹ none knows what the morrow will bring forth. Fate is tortuous: who knows what it will show next. What dost thou know but that from the darkness of this separation a great brightness of union may come? Though I am sick through Fate, I have hope of healing from it, too. However much I am enveloped in mist, I have not lost hope of fine weather and moonlight. Our present parting is thus that we may be more united in heart again. Surely the day of grief is past, and there will come upon us a time of rejoicing and gladness. As long as I live I shall not sever our connection. Thou art my sun, and if thy ray be not near me, the world appears in mine eyes to be the colour of thy hair. Hey, hey! how much that is undesirable has befallen me from Fate! and the cause of all was love for thee! Now, I think that an end has come to our grief. Henceforth a share of joy will fall to our lot. The end of all great grief is joy. There is no door shut which will not be opened. There is no uphill which has not a downhill. Spring comes when winter binds the mountain."

Vis said:

"That is so, but I have no hope from my fate. My fate is so inimical to me that when it takes away my friend it will show me his face again no more. I fear thy nature,² that in Gorab thou wilt find a pretty girl and love her.

¹ *Mace.* Cf. 378.

² *Buneba.*

The maids of that country are full fair in form and feature, and when thou seest them thou wilt forget me; thou wilt give thy heart to them and forsake me. | Thou 253 art going to Gorab for sport, and thy heart will begin to turn like a mill.¹ Thou shalt see such a foison of fair ones that thou wilt not know which to choose. Whenever the women of those parts show their faces to a man they will ravish your heart by their hair, their lovely faces, and their beauty. As the wind of autumn takes the leaves from the tree, so do the women of those parts seize the hearts of youths by their enchanting eyes. If thou hadst a heart a thousand times as hard as an anvil,² thou wilt be without heart when thou seest them. Though thou couldst bind the devil³ himself, thou canst not save thyself from them."

Ramin said :

" If the moon were to roam around me for a month, adorned with stars, and the sun covering her as a crown, and she had every beauty; if she knew all charms to capture the heart of man; if her kiss were immortality, and her appearance desirable as Paradise; if her sight were the rejuvenator of old men, and her lips the revivers of corpses—by my sun, it could not make me forsake my love for thee. I should not wish for it, nor should I think of its so peerless love, for thy sake. Thy very nurse would seem to me more beloved and honourable than that."

Then they embraced and kissed each other, and separated. Saffron fell short of their cheeks in yellowness, and pearls rained abundantly. The smoke of their sighs mounted to heaven, the air became like hell, and the earth by their tears like the Sea of Omain.⁴ They were both like wretched beggars, and remained as if stupefied. When Ramin mounted his horse, the decree of God took off from Vis the veil of patience. | Vis's body became like a 254 bow, and Ramin flew from her like an arrow. Thus Vis lamented and wept:

¹ *Dolabi.*

² *Gurdemli*, 144, 383. R., 5.

³ *Eshma*, 851.

⁴ *Omain*, 285.

"O thou who art gone away from me, when thou goest away my patience also departs until thy coming. By the decree of God thou art gone travelling, and I am cast into a pit of desire. As long as thou art a wayfarer thy friend will have no rest from weeping. What is this fate of mine? It has forsaken me, for sometimes I sit on the throne, sometimes in the cinders. This narrow heart of mine is so filled up with grief that it could not find room in a great plain sixty days' journey (in length).¹ Mine eyes are seas in the amount of their moisture, and my heart is hell by the inexhaustibility of griefs. I am not to be blamed for impatience and powerlessness. Who can stay continually in the sea, or who can bear being in hell? What can befall me worse than this, for I could not think of a worse curse than this for my foe!"

Ramin proceeded. The sound of his trumpets reached to heaven, the dust of his hosts was like a cloud; but Ramin's tears were the rain from it. Although he pondered that discourse in his heart, and the parting from Vis grieved him, he also was afflicted. His heart was knotted, and on his face gloom settled. None can see that anyone is a lover unless at a great distance he sees the grief of love. If he have patience in separation, that man knows not love, and it does not become him.

Though Ramin was the lord of the land and chief of his brother's hosts, his heart in his realm without Vis was like 255 a fish without water. He travelled over his land, everywhere he was famed and magnified. Wherever his command went, everywhere evil-doing was chased away. Gurgan became so secure that sheep and wolves were together, and the wolves shepherded² the sheep. Folk drank and rejoiced so much that, so to say, the rivers of that land were all of wine. By his justice every man (was enabled to) sit with minstrels. In fear of him every enemy was subdued. There was peace from wild beasts as well as from evil-doers. And he held Ispaan as his

¹ *Edji*, 263—stage, league, also road, path. R., 462, 930.

² *Uchobnobdian*. Persian, *choban*—a shepherd.

residence, and Djordjan, Re, Haval, and Bagdad were his. No one had better or more numerous troops than he. By his virtue and justice every soul was at rest. The lands were beautified, the trees bore fruit, and every man in that land thanked God for this state of affairs.

RAMIN FALLS IN LOVE WITH GUL

RAMIN began to travel in all directions in his lands, to inquire into affairs of State, to hunt, and to tilt. He went to Amian, and at Gorab the local notables and the peers of monarchs, Shahp'hur and Rap'hed, came to meet him. In that land they were grandees, and noteworthy for their birth. They entertained him in a manner befitting him. In the morning they went to hunt, and in the evening they sat carousing and making merry. As in the chase he had always his sword in his hand for the lions and panthers, and bow and arrow for game, so when he was indoors he had a glass in his hand. Thus pleasantly they rejoiced; but he could not in this way put away the thought of Vis from his heart, either in the field or in the house.

One day he was going to the chase when he saw a maid like the sun. Her name was Gul. In form and beauty she was without blemish. She was a flower of spring, gladdening the heart, scattering grief; a doer of righteousness, a ravisher of the heart in a moment; sovereign of beauties, skilfully attracting youths; a healer of the sick, a consoler of the afflicted. Her face was like a rose-garden, and her hair black and curly, | as thick as sugar-canes. The form¹ of her hair, which fell to her ankles, was a rope² to bind lovers, and (ill) Fate had not yet smelt her out. On her tiny lips there was a taste of candy,³ and in that jacinth appeared a setting of pearl. Her eyelashes

¹ *Qalbi*, var., *qalibi*, 244. ² *Toilo*, 260, 279—leg-rope for horses.

³ *Qandi*, R., 3.

had been taught archery by the Ap'khkazians.¹ In colour and perfume they imaged forth amber. Her eyebrows (? shaped) like the (new) moon, her arrow² was musk, and the arrow³ of her eyelashes pierced the hearts of young men. One of her lips was like a rose bestrewed⁴ with musk, and the other was like immortality. Stone was the slave of her heart, and steel the bondman of her beauty. Flower of coral⁵ was the image of her cheeks, and her form was a juniper⁶-tree of flesh and blood. One like her has never been seen. The whiteness of her body was like veiled⁷ crystal. She held her head high in her great complacency⁸ as one who made lovers to pine. In the excessive richness of her adornment she was like a treasure-house, in the abundance of jewels and pearls she was like an unopened pearl-shell. From her crown the moon flashed, from her face the sun, from her teeth the stars, and from her neck dawns.⁹ In her pride she was like a youthful monarch, and in desirableness like life. In beauty like a spring garden, and in her great rarity like a unicorn.¹⁰ She had handmaidens beautiful like herself—Chinese, Turkis, Greeks. There stood forty round Gul, like stars about the moon.

When Ramin saw the walking cedar and the living¹¹ moon, which, like the sun, did not cease from glittering, his heart | grew weak ; he gazed as one dazed, the arrow 258 fell from his hand. He could not believe her to be of Adam's race. "Are not these her soldiers like stars, and is not their mistress the moon ? And if these be moons, is not their mistress the sun ?" Ramin thought thus, and gazed. Then Gul, the ravisher of the patience of young men, came to Ramin to greet him, like an old friend. She saluted him and kissed his hand. She said :

¹ Ap'khkazia, on the Black Sea. Evidently this passage is due to the Georgian translator. Cf. Marr : "Odes."

² Arqi=arrow of birch.

³ Isari—? for sari, R., 869, 871, 1206=a support for vines, prop.

⁴ Motzrili, ? tzra—to sift.

⁵ Var., brotsuli, 276 (pomegranate), for dzotseuli. ⁶ Gia.

⁷ Qasab. ⁸ Gemovnoba. ⁹ Mt'chiebi. ¹⁰ Martorka.

¹¹ Sulieri—human, animated.

“Renowned monarch, our land is illumined by thee, as the heavens by the sun. Now night has fallen, be pleased to dismount at our house, rest here; be our guest this night. Let us entertain thee. We shall set before thee dainty dishes. I will offer thee in abundance birds and game, I will give thee pure wine, I will cast violets and roses before thee, I will dress a banquet befitting thee, I will entertain thee as thy soul loveth. Our custom is hospitality.”

Ramin fell so much in love with her that he forgot Vis's heart and love. The gaze of his eyes was treacherous as Fate. Vis's fear and alarm, alas! were justified. Woe to that heart which trusts to such a fickle lover, and woe to that man who is so fickle and perjured, unstable in love, and a breaker of oaths. Ramin answered Gul thus:

“O moon, tell me but this: What is thy name, or of what race art thou? Hast thou as yet disposed of thy fair self or not? Wilt thou have me for thy husband or not? What price¹ do thy parents demand from him who would 259 take thee to wife? | How much dost thou ask for a kiss? If thou askest even a thousand souls, I grudge not even that.”

The eloquent² sun and fleshly image (idol)³ thus replied:

“As the sun is not hidden, so I and my name cannot be hidden. Neither do I wish to say this, that I am a certain Vhamani.⁴ My mother is Gohar, and my father, Rap'hed, is prince of this kingdom. My brother also is lord of Adrabadagan. I have many brothers, all Goliath-braves.⁵ In race and in virtue we are all alike, famous and renowned. On the mother's side and the father's I am unblemished.⁶ The one is of Gorab, and the other of Amian. My name is Gul.⁷ Like my name, I am a rose in colour, like a rose I am beloved, and I am scented like a rose. I was born fair from my mother, and brought up pure by my nurse. In

¹ *Mehari*. ² *Enovani*—endowed with speech. ³ *Bu'thi*, 240.

⁴ ? Bahman—nobody in particular; Spanish, *fulano*. ? cf. *Vaaman*, 25. R., 1222, *Vadaman*.

⁵ *Goliat'hni*, 31, *dchabucni*.

⁶ *Uzado*, 38. R., 1468.

⁷ Rose in Persian. The reader should remember that the Persian rose is pink.

form I am fine like my father, and lovely of face like my mother. My breast is silver, and my neck is crystal. I am soft as ermine,¹ and fragrant as musk. Why dost thou ask my race and name since all the land knows it to be praiseworthy? If thou knowest not my name, yet I know thine exceeding well. Thou art Ramin, Shahinshah's brother, and Vis's lover, by whose nurse thou art bewitched, and thou preferrest her to soul and heart.

“PARABLE (*Araci*): If Bagdad can exist without the river,² then thou, too, couldst live without Vis.

“But why do I speak? Thy love to Vis can no more be washed out from thee than blackness from a negro. The 260 old nurse binds thy heart in love for Vis, her (the nurse's) rope³ and nail⁴ are her sorcery and incantations. Thou canst not exist away from her and stay with a beauty like me. And since thou canst not bear to be without her, be hers alone! She will be a disgrace to thee and thou to her, and both of you fill Shahinshah with shame. In all the world there is no place where your story will not be told, and they will not deride you.”

Ramin said:

“O moon, shining down from above, never reproach the lover who is overtaken by mischance. When thou seest (such) a man, ask pardon for him from God. Now I curse my former mind and self. But every act of God is hidden from man. The doings of God's providence upon us are long. Reproach me not. If my deed was so shameful, my fate brought it on me. None can bring back the past. We should not recall yesterday. Know this present, that I am so anxious to know thee, that I prefer thee to all I have seen. God willing, thou shalt not repent being my wife. Be my sun, and let thy face be the soother of my heart. I shall be thine own, and shall seek to fulfil all thy wishes. If thou desirest even my life, I shall not grudge it. Save

¹ *Qarqumi* (Turkish, *qaqum*), 118. ² Karakoram. R., 123. Marr, IV. 104, note, and XII. 44, 1.

³ *Didjila*, var., *Diladji*, 198, 261, 301. R., 818, 880.

⁴ *Toilo*—hobble, 257, 279.

⁴ *Lusmari*, 416.

thee, I shall seek no other to illumine my palace, and none shall be the balm of my soul save thee. I shall never return to that past which would annoy me against thee and thee against me. But if thou wilt be my wife, I swear to 261 thee that I am | weary of all love save thine, and I will never mention Vis's name."

Gul thus replied :

"Spread not for me, O Ramin, a web¹ of enchantment. I am not one who can be bound in thy net² so easily. I desire neither royalty nor greatness from thee, neither a field full of soldiers, nor a treasure-house full of wealth. I have one wish, and if I find its fulfilment in thee, I shall not transgress thy command. When it appears that thou wilt carry on my love to the end and not abandon me, thou shalt not find one thine own like me; and if thou art not a fickle lover, thou must never desire to go to Khuarasan, nor to be near Vis, nor to mention her, because one person's property is not another's. Why should Moabad's wife be attached³ to thee as thy queen? Thou shalt never write to her, never send a man to her, nor let love for her be in thy heart. If thou wilt swear to me to this effect,⁴ then on my body shall be two heads and one soul."

Ramin rejoiced at this. He made no reply. He stretched out his hand, and they went into Rap'hed's house. Ramin held Gul by the hand. She poured a hundred vessels full of jewels and pearls at Ramin's feet,⁵ she seated him on a golden throne. Whoever of their kinsfolk were magnates and nobles, they called them all and made merry. In confirmation of the deed, Ramin swore solemnly by their (local) oaths, by God and fire, that : "As long as the earth endures, 262 and Djeon⁶ flows a stream; ⁷ | as long as fish are found in the sea, or the sun and moon have brilliance; as long as night is dark, as the wind blows on the mountains, and

¹ *Bade*, 286.

² *Makhe*, 264, 294.

³ ? should the reading be *mogepherebis* (suit thee) for *mogecerebis*?

⁴ *Am pirsa zeda*—on that subject.

⁵ Var., Ramin poured at Rap'hed's feet.

⁶ Djeon, 143, 267, 288, 431, 449. R., 731.

⁷ Didjila, 259.

beasts feed in the plains,—I living shall seek none save Gul, I shall desire no other wife nor lover, nor shall I mention the name of the sorceress Vis, as if I had never loved her. As long as I live, Gul shall be my heart.¹ I have separated myself from other love and am weary of it. The rose, a rose in name, is mine, my wife, and Gorab is mine abode. As long as I have the rose I shall not smell a violet; as long as there is a moon, I shall not esteem the light of the stars."

Upon the confirmation of this oath, all Gul's kinsfolk came from all parts—from Gurgan, Re, Qum, Ispaan, Koistan, Khuzistan, and Ran; there were monarchs and nobles. The court was filled with light. They made the wedding and gave Gul to Ramin.

¹ Play on the word *gul(i)*. In Georgian, "heart"; in Persian, "rose."

THE WEDDING OF RAMIN AND GUL-VARDI¹

A SPACE of forty stages² was prepared, and spectators stood on the roofs. The holding in their hands of ruddy wine was like as if their hands had been figures of poppies.³ At night the earth was like a starry sky by reason of the multitude of candles. Instead of verdure, brocade⁴ was spread everywhere. The ear heard no sound save the voice of rejoicing and of minstrels. The birds minstrelled,⁵ the flame and smoke from the censing of perfumes rose in the air. For a month women and men spent their time in merriment and drinking. There remained no joy in which they did not partake. They rejoiced without stint in merry-making on foot and on horseback. There was no grief in their heart. The earth cannot be without grief; but in that land grief was no longer found.

The affectionate and youthful husband and wife were united; day and night they rested not from joy. They began to give gifts to the monarchs and the nobles and all the people. Singers and minstrels were paid highly for celebrating Ramin's fame, and poets for reciting laudatory and congratulatory verses. Ramin's story was become famous and his name was magnified. He had come from 264 Khuarasan to hunt, and he had caught a sun-faced, peerless quarry. Thus they said: "Now the rose and flower of

¹ *Vardi*=rose, and is thus a synonym of the Persian *gul*.

² *Edji*, 254, 267, 303. R., 462, 930. The dictionary meanings are evidently inapplicable. ? *stadium*.

³ *Qaqacho*, 270.

⁴ *Stavra*, 194, 285. R., 672, 1414.

⁵ *Mutriboba*.

beauty blooms on thy couch ; mayst thou always smell the rose of Paradise, whose gardener is a two-weeks¹ full moon. Thy rose blooms in winter, too, and thou hast always a rose without a thorn. Rejoice, thy rose is unfading in winter and summer. Two narcissi stand as sentinels over thy rose ; by the colour of thy rose old men become young, and by her scent corpses become quickened. Thou shouldst seek thy rose with thy heart,² and thou shouldst smell thy rose with thy soul. Thy rose has been planted by angels and guarded by God. Round about her is spread a net³ of amber. May you two live forever, and may you be thus as we have said, and may Fate turn according to your desires."

When one month had passed, the wedding guests dispersed. Ramin spent the time pleasantly with Gul. He rejoiced, he hunted, he tilted, he drank, and sported.

They went to the citadel of Gorab. When Gul was adorned and mounted, she made the land so light that between her and the sun there was a strife in the eyes of the onlookers. Her raiment was royal, and under it she shone fairly. Why should I speak at length, there was no limit to her beauty of face and adornment. When Ramin in security gazed on such a one as his own, unblemished—for her hair was like a cloud from which a rain of musk showered, and her earrings seemed like stars at the root of her crystal ears—the joyful Ramin thanked God and his fate, and impiously forgot his oath to Vis.

| One day they were sitting alone in a chamber. Ramin 265 gazed on Gul and said :

" On the earth there is no face like thine, not even Vis's ; nevertheless you resemble each other. Though thou makest the moon despicable, and thou art the balm of my heart, thou resemblest her, the ravisher of my heart ; but how much, I do not remember when I am with thee."

¹ ? for *tselisa* (year) read *cuiris* (week).

² The passage plays on the double meaning of *gul* (rose) in Persian, and *guli* (heart) in Georgian.

³ *Makhe*, 261.

Gul was annoyed at this speech of Ramin's, she became angry and said :

" O traitor,¹ denier of God ! Is such language justifiable from a sovereign ? May God make mine enemy like her. How do I indeed resemble her ? She is a witch,² an evildoer, an evil-speaker, shameless, a libertine ! God grant there be no more sorceresses³ like the nurse, chief among witches, harlot and pander !⁴ Through them thou art become so clownish⁵ in thy behaviour that thou canst never rejoice thyself, nor let those near thee rejoice. Didst thou not swear to me that as long as thou shouldst live thou wouldest never mention Vis's name again ? Now, if it had not been that thou hadst been afflicted by her love thou wouldest not have forgotten this oath."

¹ *Upiruli*—? breaker of agreement. Cf. *piri*, 246.

² *Djado* (Persian).

³ *Mkhiblavi*.

⁴ *Madchacali*—go-between.

⁵ *Uvitzad*

RAMIN'S LETTER ABANDONING VIS

WHEN Ramin saw that his mention of Vis afflicted Gul so much, in order to demand pardon and forgiveness, at that very moment, sitting down before her, he caused inkhorn¹ and paper to be brought. Although the ink² was mixed with musk, he girded on the sharp sword of enmity, by which he cut the branch of the tree of joy. Whoever knows this story let her guard her heart from a lover and not fall into love, lest, like Vis, she remain hopelessly heart-broken. The impious Ramin wrote a letter to his own constant lover, to Vis, who had not forsaken him. Thus he wrote :

“ Vis, thou thyself knowest how much shame, dishonour, and harm have come upon me through love for thee, which I have not hitherto realized on account of the arts of you (and your nurse). I have displeased God, and am fallen into³ such reproach among men that I am set up as a remembrance in the land, and I see no man by whom my deed is praised. Many have advised me, many have reproached me, and many have even derided me because of thee. As if my love for thee were enmity against them, every woman and man curses what I have done. Even those who knew me not had thus heard my name. All defamed me. | I was become of no account in the eyes of 267 the army. This was my repose : sometimes I saw a sword over my head to slay me, sometimes a hungry lion on my

¹ *Satserili*, 284—writing materials, sometimes “ pen.” Cf. Isaiah viii. 1.

² *Melani*.

³ *Chavidcher*, 75, 96, 280. R., 1188.

path. Since I saw thee¹ I have not had rest a single moment, nor has consolation entered my heart. When I was near thee I was worse. I ceaselessly shed tears of blood, and the fear of death possessed me. I never separated from thee without shedding Gihon² from my eyes. And I never saw thy face but I heard a thousand painful, reproachful words, and, besides all this, the fear of God and expectation of His wrath possessed me. Thou knewest me also before my love, how merry and renowned I was. My foes feared me, and showed themselves friendly, and wild beasts were exterminated by me. When I was angry, even lions feared me; and when I was fierce, I was more keen than a sword. When I flew the falcon³ of my youth, the moon of heaven was in dread, and the courser of my will sped so far that thought could not follow. My soul was full of joy and gladness,⁴ my pearl-shell was full of precious jewels. I was a cypress in the garden of joy, and on the field of battle a hill of steel.⁵ The rock of my hill was gold, and the bed of my Mtcvari⁶ was pearl. When I saw thee and learned to know thee, thou thyself knewest what I became henceforth. That Fate which was subject to me has now subdued me.⁷ My form became like meadow-sweet,⁸ and love made a star of my two weeks' moon. Fate darkened the light of my sky, and made it bitter as hell to me. When the fire of love touched me, gladness⁴ fled from me a hundred days by stages.⁹ Knowledge went forth from my heart, and I remained powerless.

268 | Every man drew his bow and shot arrows of reproach at me. I was wounded by love, and they poured the salt of reproach on me. I was drunk from lack of heart, and I fell down. Now I write to say farewell to thee, for I am weary of thy love, and also to inform thee of my state.

¹ ? an intentional *zma* (play upon words): "Ramin akh."

² *Djeon*, 261, 288. ³ *Shavardeni*, 194, 271. R., 459, 606.

⁴ *Nishati*, 197, 450. R., 323, 666, 707. ⁵ *Basri*, 420.

⁶ 56, 77, 171, *Mtcvari*, the modern name of the Kura, on which Tiflis stands, seems to mean simply "river" in Visramiani.

⁷ *Dzabuni*, 241—coward, subdued. ⁸ *Graci* (*Spiraea crenata* Pall.).

⁹ *Edji*, 263.

My state, by the power of God, is very pleasant, and lacking in nothing, nor do I lack consolation. Know this, Vis, that God has had mercy on me, and has delivered me from thee. I have found all my heart's desire in thine absence. I have washed my life with coral water.¹ I have wedded a peerless wife, such as I desired. I have sown in my heart a rose-coloured love, and have chased away the rust of grief. I am in a state like Paradise. I am always near my Gul. I have always an unfaded rose. My couch and pillow² are full of the rose, whom I prefer to mine eyes and life. As long as I have her I shall not seek a lily;³ as long as the moon illumines me, I shall not seek nor esteem a star. As woes and bitterness have come upon me from thee, I have seen from her a thousand gratifications and fulfilments of desire. If I had for one moment seen such gratification from thee, with joy I could have flown to the sky. When I remember the days of the past, I pity mine own self. How could I endure in following thee so many woes and bitterness? Like a strayed dog, I knew not mine own road. Hitherto I have been asleep, and now I am awake. I have been drunk, and am sober. Now I have broken the chains of misfortune, | now I have come 269 forth from the dungeon of misery. Now, in my right mind, I have sworn to Gul by God the Creator, by the sun, moon, by the faith, fire, wisdom and hope, that as long as I live I shall not part from the Rose (Vardi), and shall not leave her for a moment. Know this henceforth. Be calm, for Marav is thine, and Mah is mine; Moabad is thine, and Gul is mine. Thou belongest to him. I prefer one moment here, merry in the company of Gul, to a thousand years in thy presence, for my youth seemed to me a dungeon. Count no longer the months and days till my coming. Wait not for me, nor gaze along the road for me, for it will be long ere thou see me. When such a thing befalls one, patience is better than a load⁴ of gold."

¹ Reading *dzotsisa* for *modzisa*, which is unintelligible.

² *Sasthauli*, 82, 280. R., *sasthunali*, 514, 1126.

³ *Sosani*.

⁴ *Sapalne*, 828.

When Ramin had finished this letter, he sealed it with a golden seal, gave it to a swift messenger,¹ and said :

“ Go so quickly as not to lose a moment, and deliver this letter to Vis.”

The messenger took the letter and travelled more swiftly than the wind, so that in three weeks he entered Marav. At that moment they told Shahinshah of his coming. They led him before him. He drew out the letter and read it. He marvelled much at such words being addressed to Vis, and rejoiced. When he had read it all, he threw the letter to Vis, and in derision asked something in return for his good tidings, saying :

270 “ Now God will open your eyes, for Ramin and | Gul are husband and wife, lovingly together in Gorab, and thou art left wounded.”

¹ *P'haici.*

CHAPTER XLV

VIS RECEIVES RAMIN'S LETTER

WHEN Vis saw Ramin's messenger¹ and the letter, her heart straightway began to quake and cry out. She perceived that the impious Ramin had abandoned his constant friend. When Moabad gave the letter to Vis, the fire of grief burned her from head to foot, her blood boiled in her body, and her heart impelled her to self-slaughter. But at that moment, for fear of Moabad, for shame of men, and also for anger at Ramin, she resolved to hide her feelings. She was like a poppy,² in that outside she was gay, after her wont, and inside her heart was black. Outside she was like Paradise, and in her heart, through sorrow, like hell. With a laugh she hid her grief, and passed by like an ambler.³ Although she hid her grief, nevertheless her face grew yellow as she read the letter. She said to Moabad :

“I myself entreated this from God, that the | tongue of 271
mine enemies might be shortened, in order that thou
shouldst no longer reproach me for the deed, nor seek
every moment a pretext against me. For this joy I will
give much wealth to the poor and villages to the fire-
shrines,⁴ that I may be delivered from grief, and that I
may pass from thy suspicion, that mine enemies may rest
from meditating evil. I have not slept pleasantly for one
night on account of my fear of thee. Now, however, I
shall rest, for there is no longer anything to trouble me.
If the moon be gone away, the sun is left to me. Every

¹ *Shicrici*, 274.

² *Qaqacho*, 268, 276.

³ *T'hukharigi*, 45.

⁴ *Satzetskhle*, 146, 350.

man is hopeful in the sun. Mine eyes are enlightened by the sight of thee. Why should I grieve at Ramin's absence?"

Vis spoke thus, but her heart and tongue were no more in tune than the voice and harp of a bad minstrel. When Moabad went out, Vis fell into a fever at Ramin's absence; her spirits came up to her mouth; her heart beat like a partridge¹ in the claws of a falcon;² cold sweats flowed like the dew of night on the rose; from the narcissi tears flowed on the jacinth; her musk-coloured hair swept the dust of the court; on her head she poured ashes, and bruised her breast with her fist. She lamented and said :

"What shall I do? What is this poisoned arrow which has pierced mine eyes? What is this sharp sword, whose diamond point has cut my heart? What sort of fate is this of mine which has darkened the light of day for me? What sort of one-sided love is this which has made my soul sick? Help, nurse! Come, know my grief; see how the stream of Noah's³ flood has insensibly carried me away from the golden throne. I am set upon ashes, and burrs⁴ and thorns have come forth on the path of my patience. If

272 thou hast not heard, I will tell thee | what has befallen me from Ramin. Ramin went to Gorab, wedded a wife, and, not satisfied with this, afterwards wrote me a letter with the good tidings, saying: 'I have sown a rose, and from it fruit has come forth to me; now I seek no longer a despicable, dried-up bindweed.'⁵ Now what shall I do? What will they say of me in Marav? Every woman and man should rather weep for me. Seek some means for me, O nurse, to deliver me from this grief. Since I heard this news I have wished that I had been dead before. Now I no longer desire the world, nor life, nor mother, nor brother, nor gold and adornment, nor any other consolation, since Ramin is gone from me. He was my soul, and without a soul a man

¹ *Cacabi*, 275. R., 227.

² *Shavardeni*, 267, 277.

³ *Noe*.

⁴ *Birci*—burdock (*Carduus nutans*, *Carduus acanthoides*), 343.

⁵ *Tsalica*, or *tsqlis ina*—? swine's-grass (*Polygonum aviculare*).

cannot rejoice in this world. I will go, I will wash myself from all sin, I will entreat God, I will bestow wealth on the poor. Surely God will have mercy on me, and by these my prayers Ramin will be made to hate his wife, he will begin to repent him of this deed. At midnight he will come from Gorab to Marav, soaked with rain and frozen with cold, and will sue to Vis and the nurse; then he will see from me as much contempt as I now see from him."

She prayed with tears to God, and said: "O Creator God, make him impatient and sad like me, and let Ramin suffer instead of me."

The nurse said:

"Do not grieve so much, it is not fitting. Now wipe the rust from thy heart with calmness and patience. Do not weary the royal, happy, and clear-cut form so much, do not pain by weeping in vain thy reposeful heart, | do not 273 injustice to thy soul and thy youth. Death is indeed more pleasant than such a life."

When she laid her hand on her rosy cheek, the nurse seized her hand, and said:

"When thou tearest thy musky hair and scratchest thy face, fairer than God's grace, thou becomest like an old *dev* in hideousness. Though a man possessed the whole earth, he would desire more and more; but everything he desires for himself. When thou art no longer alive, there will be neither Moabad, nor Ramin, nor thy nurse (for thee). When I die of thirst, after I am gone, let them not find anywhere watersprings. When the earth is left without me, after me enemy and friend are all one. Every man is bold enough in wedding a wife, but, like Ramin, he is soon sated, and his tongue, sharper than a sword, becomes like wax. If Ramin finds a thousand stars and the moon too, they have not, all united, the beauty of one sun. Vardi (Rose) of Gorab, although she be sun-faced, one of thy hands is fairer than she. Since Ramin has gone away and left thee, I do not blame him at all for wedding a wife. He

who cannot get pure¹ wine should not be blamed for drinking dregs.”²

The silver-breasted Vis thus replied :

“ O nurse, thou knowest that I have spent my youth in suffering and sadness. Women have husbands and paramours, too. The husband I have is old and jealous, and the lover I have is fickle and forsaking. I have damaged mine own honour, for I have wished to make profit and I have lost my capital (?i.e., I have lost honour, 274 the source of all pleasure and advantage), | I have left my silver on the road to run after gold, and now I am left sad with nothing. Do not advise me, nurse, do not teach me patience. He cannot be patient who sleeps on (the) fire. My couch and pillow are fire, and the demon³ of my passion is seated on the fire. How could I be patient sitting on the fire, even if my soul were steel or brass ? Do not ask me any more to be patient ; do not in vain measure the wind in a bushel.⁴ There is no such sage, no such physician who knows a cure for me. That messenger⁵ has pierced up to the feather my heart with a thousand poisoned arrows by the letter he brought. What dost thou say, O nurse ? That messenger,⁶ ravisher of my life, has struck my heart with the arrow of a catapult⁷ spotted with musk ; he brought a letter from Ramin, and takes back an answer soiled with blood from Vis. I will cause him to weep piteously, and I will cause tears of blood to flow in streams from my wounded heart. O lovers, seekers of love ! To-day I am the chief of lovers ; I will teach you all and advise you. I will speak to you freely in my need. Hearken to my true words : Look on me and love none, look on me and give your hearts to none, plant not in your hearts the plant of love, for if you plant it you destroy your souls, and you shall not eat the fruit thereof. If you have not heard my story—it has been written in blood on my face—read it there. See ! see ! how many sorrows I have passed through

¹ *Muravaqiani* (*muravi*). Cf. Arabic.

² *T'hhkle.*

³ *Eshma*, 277, 351.

⁴ *Cabitsi.*

⁵ *Shicrici*, 270.

⁶ *P'haranda*—a sort of bird (= messenger) (?).

⁷ *Chalkhi.*

for love ! Love has burned my heart with such a fire that however often I extinguish it, it burns up more and more ; I have made the earth into clay¹ with my tears, and I cannot put it out. How is this an eye of flesh that sleeps not, what fire is this which I water does not quench ? I used² to 275 bring up and care for hawks.³ I reared a fledgling⁴ with a thousand indulgences. When its feathers grew,⁵ and it moulted its youthful down, it became bold and flew up, it began to chase partridges.⁶ I thought it would hunt for me. Suddenly it left me, so that I lost sight of it in the air. Now I am weary of pursuing and seeking the lost one. Alas for my so many woes suffered in vain ! Alas for my hopelessness of the world ! Alas for my so great heart-woundedness, by which I have remained joyless and fruitless ! I will roam and wander in the lands like a caravaner,⁷ maybe I shall find a track, a sign of the lost one. My heart, too, is gone away with my lover, and now I cannot stay here lacking both heart and lover. Through the wrath of that stony heart I will begin to strike my head with a stone, and I will also begin to roam on the mountains. If I find anywhere a sign of him who took away my heart, I shall give my life as a largesse for the good tidings. How long shall I be thus burned with fire ? How am I displeasing to my fate ? I am abandoned by both lover and luck. I have become a corpse, O nurse, through thee, for thou didst teach me love, and sow the fire of passion in my heart. Thou wert my blind guide⁸ on that road ; thou hast cast me into a pit,⁹ and now thou, too, must take me out. Although I have seen great trouble through thee, I endure it, because help will come from thee too. Arise, sit no longer, make ready for the road, deliver my message to Ramin, and say :

“ ‘ O traitor ! hypocrite ! Bravo,¹⁰ well hast thou strung

¹ *T'hikhhe.*

² *Khelad.*

³ *Kori*, 277. R., 855.

⁴ *Mart'hue.*

⁵ *Capoeti*—a bird a year old.

⁶ *Cacabi*, 271.

⁷ *Mokaravne*, 84, 296. R., 1007.

⁸ *Qolauzi*, 224, 332. R., 955, 1850.

⁹ *Ormo*, 228, 286.

¹⁰ *Shabash*, 152. R., 741, 879.

the bow of ill-doing; thine eye is become blind to justice, and thou hast despised the fate of virtue. In breed
 276 thou art like the scorpion.¹ | If even a stone comes in thy way thou strikest it, and thus thou dost not disavow thy race. Thou art a serpent; thou knowest nought save striking. Thou art a wolf, for thou doest nought but harm. From thy conscience such deed was fitting as thou hast done, for thou hast broken thine oath to her who trusted in thee. Though I am heart-pained by thee, this shame oppresses me because of thee. Do not ill, and even think not (ill); for if thou doest ill, evil will befall thee. If thou hast wholly forgotten my love, thou shalt remain disgraced with thy lover. At that time when thou wert going away thou didst not lead me to believe that thou wouldest have forgotten me by this time. Thy discourse was like a poppy² petal: outside it appeared red, underneath lay a black snake.³ If thou weddest a new wife, may God make you happy; but make me not so hopeless. He who finds gold does not throw away his silver. If thou hast dug a new canal⁴ in Gorab, do not abandon the old canal in Marav. If in Koistan thou hast built a new house, do not lay waste the old palace in Marav. If a rose has been sown in thy garden, may it be happy; but tear not up the violet beside it. Guard both the new wife and the old love, for from every tree comes its own kind of fruit.”

Vis spoke thus pitifully, and from her eyes flowed tears of blood. The nurse pitied her greatly; she, too, wept, and said:

“Queen of beauties, make me not to sit on fire, and pour not rosewater on the pomegranate⁵ flower. I will not spare myself; forthwith I go to Gorab, and I shall come thither as swiftly as an arrow travels a stadium.⁶ Whatever
 277 means I know I will use for thee with Ramin. | I shall surely turn his heart to thee and deliver thee from this grief.”

¹ *Ghrincali.*

² *Qaqacho*, 270.

³ *Gueli*—? for *guli* (heart).

⁴ *Rui*, 194, 241, 291. R., 926, 1376.

⁵ *Brotseuli*, 257.

⁶ *Utevani*, 50, 342. R., 430.

When she had thus spoken, the nurse went quickly away.

When she came to the land of Gorab, she met Ramin coming from the chase. He had slain so much game that mountain and plain could not find room for them; a needle¹ even could not fall on the earth because of the hunting panthers² and dogs; the air was full of hawks, kites, and falcons.³ When Ramin saw the nurse he was as perturbed and angry as if those arrows soiled by the game had struck his heart. He did not salute the woman, nor did he ask news of Vis, nor of Moabad, nor even of his country. He said wrathfully:

“O impure demon,⁴ evil-doer and evil speaker, I have been deceived by thine arts a thousand times and more, and thou hast robbed me of my wits. Now again thou art come and desirest to seduce me. Never may thy wind see my dust nor may thy hand seize my bridle.⁵ Hence thou shalt turn and speedily depart. In vain for you has been this your journey. Go and say to Vis: ‘What dost thou want from me, and what more dost thou desire of me? Why wilt thou not set me free, and why art thou not sated with so much sin? Thou hast committed a great fault in following after thy heart’s desire, and by thine evil fame grievous mischance has come upon thee. Now it is time that thou make a vow to God, to repent and begin to do good and follow after honour. We have both wasted our youth in vain, and have flung away our good fame for heart’s desire. We both are lost in this world, and in eternity we shall be punished. Now, if thou | wilt not make a vow to God and 278 exercise patience, I certainly shall not follow thee on this road. If we do this deed for a thousand years, nothing will remain in our hands save sin and wind. I have made a vow and I have hearkened to the counsel of the prudent; I have sworn to sin no more against God, and that I will henceforth nevermore be united to Vis. But when God brings it to pass, then I shall be united with the things

¹ *Nemei*, 55.

² *Avaza*, 80, 56, 291. R., 461, 1187.

³ *Kori*, 275; *gavazi*, R., 211; *shavardeni*, 271.

⁴ *Eshma*, 229, 278.

⁵ *Sadave*, 824, 832.

that fall to my lot, when the sovereignty of the land of Mah falls to me; but who knows how many years may pass ere this? Until then, not a little¹ water shall flow over the sand, and this affair is like the old saw² which says: "Don't die, donkey, the clover³ is coming up." I shall be united to her when day and night are one. How long shall I be tortured by her hopes? If for one year the sun himself had suffered what I endured when following after the wife of another, even his face would have been blackened. My youth is gone from me in waiting for her, and I bewail it. Alas! for my days passed in vain! Alas that my youth is lost, and now I have no resource but repentance! My manhood was like a peacock⁴ in beauty, a rock in strength, and my youth like a spring flower. My love bloomed in its pride, and now in its fall it is like the autumn leaf; my love and my joy have brought me sorrow. Every spring the earth will bloom, but my youth will never bloom again! If the nature of autumn is like the nature of spring, I also have the same nature as thou hast seen Do not imagine that one can put a young man's nature in an old man. Go, forthwith, tell Vis from me: A wife can have no one better than her husband. God has given thee

279 a good husband. | If thou art happy and good, understand this, let every man save him seem to thee a dishonour, and if thou doest this which I counsel thee, thou shalt be above all queens and more renowned. Moabad is thy husband, and I will be a brother to thee; the land will be thy slave and servant, thou shalt be renowned in this world, and in eternity favoured by God.' "

Having said these things surlily, he angrily struck his horse with the whip⁵ and departed. The nurse remained on that spot, sad and ashamed. She had had no pleasure from hearing Ramin's discourse, and she had found no joy in seeing him. Repenting her blindness, she turned away. Her wounded soul saw no hope of a plaster;⁶ and

¹ *Pashta*, 40. R., 406.

² *Araci*.

³ *Alavertni* (*alaverdi* in Saba Orbeliani's Dictionary).

⁴ *P'harshamangi*, 29, 63. ⁵ *Mat'hrokhi*, 228. ⁶ *Malama*, 281

since things were so with the nurse on account of Ramin's speech and insult, how would it affect Vis, to whom such a lover had insensibly become an enemy? She had sown love, and reaped hatred; she had expected good, and seen evil. The weeping messenger-nurse went to Vis, dusty-lipped and smoky-hearted. She had carried a message sweet as sugar, and she brought an answer bitter as gall and sharp as a sword. A black cloud rained upon Vis's heart poisoned arrow-heads¹ because Ramin had become weary of her, and the rain of dishonour covered Vis with the mud of enmity; her form was wounded with a sword, and she was bound with the hobble² of mischance. Her soul fell sick from sorrow, and she betook herself to bed.

¹ *Piri*—point.

² *Toilo*, 257, 420.

VIS FALLS SICK THROUGH GRIEF

SHE had no power to rise. Her couch was stuffed with grief, and her pillow¹ was filled with yellow roses from her face. The monarchs and their wives, the magnates and their wives, with their children, came to inquire, and sat around. Some said it was jaundice² and melancholy, and some said it was bewitchment³ by sorcerers. Wherever there was in the land a good physician,⁴ astrologer,⁵ or leech,⁶ from Khuarasan, Eraq, and from everywhere, they brought them. They were troubled, and none of them could understand. Some said one thing, and some said another. They said it was because the moon was in Libra,⁷ in a bad constellation. Some said she was beloved by a being unseen on earth, and therefore suffered. Whatever anyone understood, he said it, and what afflicted her afflicted them, and they ceased not to give their minds to it. No one could discover the cause of her loss of strength and her weakness. Her heart was branded with Ramin's brand,⁸ and she was perturbed at being unable to bear it. She wept over her plight and her heart. She poured pearls abundantly on the saffron.⁹

When Moabad went out, she again overflowed, so that from her pillow tears flowed in a stream, and a lake stood in the room. She lamented so piteously that those also

281 who | heard her could not remain quiet. She said: "O

¹ *Sast'haulī*, 268.

² *Zap'hra*. Cf. *zap'hrani*—saffron, 241, 430. ³ *Mochkhibuloba*.

⁴ *Ekimi*, 291.

⁵ *Munedjibi*, 14, 15.

⁶ *Mcurnali*, 291.

⁷ *Sastsori*—balance.

⁸ *Daghi*.

⁹ *Zap'hra*, 241, 854.

lovers, look at me, wretched, and carried away by the stream of care, and beware ! O lovers, I adjure you, hearken to my counsel ! Let no one give her heart to be betrayed by a lover ; let no one take this resolve ; let no one confide. Look at me from afar, O lovers ! come not near, lest ye be consumed. My heart is burned with fire, because Ramin's heart is a steel¹ and mine tinder ;² let no one wonder at my wailing. By the ravisher of my heart, whom I thought my friend, great injustice has befallen me. I showed him my heartsoreness, I let him hear of my woe ; I expected a plaster³ from him, and instead he poured vinegar and salt on me. Let not the heart of wretched woman trust in men, and let her not be seduced by their tongues ! Hey, hey, who knows how many griefs are added to me ? One grief has become a hundred to me. That lover who formerly robbed me of my soul has now become my bloody foe ! What good has he done to me that I was not able to repay ?⁴ Alas ! in vain were all my many griefs ! He has made known to me the secret of the heart. I have sown joy ; why have I reaped grief ? I sang praise to him : why have I heard curses ? I have seen much grief for the sake of becoming accustomed to unhappy Fate, but I cannot unite glass and stone together. Now I am become weary through Fate, and I have found the rent⁵ of weariness in every (garment) of joy. I have lain down upon this wretched bed, afflicted, and always desiring death. There is no other resource save my death, since Ramin has chosen some other love instead of me. What should I do with life ?”

¹ *Cuesi*, R., 192, 262, 907, 1278.

² ? *zma* (play upon words) : *chemia bedi, chemi abedi.*

³ *Malama*, 279.

⁴ The passage is not clear.

⁵ *Chaki.*

VIS'S CONVERSATION WITH MISHKIN

THEN she called Mishkin,¹ her secretary,² who had long known their secret, and from whom she had not hidden her heart. Again she told him, and bewailed her plight. She said :

“ Whom hast thou seen, or when hast thou heard of any more fickle lover than Ramin ? If I could even believe that hair could grow on the nails, yet I should never have expected this from him. I did not think that water could flow from fire, or the gall of a snake could be in the immortality of the soul. Didst thou not know me formerly—how devout, honourable in conduct, decorous, and royal I was ? Now I am separated from all that is respectable. I am equally hateful to enemies and friends. Now I am naught. It befits me to behave royally, honourably, and decorously ; and, leaving all this, day and night I have no leisure from thinking of Ramin and following after his affairs. For his sake I have sacrificed soul, self, wealth, house, and soldiers. Sometimes I am in haste to see him, and sometimes I weep because of our separation. If I had a thousand souls, I could not spare one from thinking of him. Many a time I have been disturbed by Ramin’s stupidity, and I have suffered all for his sake. Now my help is completely cut off. | Formerly, at times a branch was lopped from my tree, but now it has been plucked up by the root. He burned me and reft me of patience by leaving me. Now Ramin has done such a thing to me that it is impossible for me to bear it. The

sword of his absence has cut off my head. The lance¹ of his fickleness has pierced my heart, and patience is impossible to one who is beheaded and heart-pierced. What worse thing than this has he done to me? First, he went away and forsook me, and married a wife; and to send me tidings of this he wrote me a letter to make me envious. Then, when I sent the nurse, he met her angrily, insulted her, and then he chased her away wounded with arrows in heart and liver, as if he had never seen the nurse all his days, and as if she had never suffered trouble for him. Now, by these deeds a mortal arrow has struck my soul, and I am fallen sick, as thou seest. Now, Mishkin, thou art prudent and skilled in words, wise and pleasant in converse, a composer of letters. Write Ramin a letter from me. Let him see my woes, and let him understand my tortures. Thou knowest well how to unite words; collect together for me all knowledge and science. Write such kinds of words as are fitting. If by virtue of thy tongue thou leadest Ramin hither, until death I will be thy servant and handmaiden. Thou art wise, and by the tongue of a wise man the heart of a young man is soon softened."

When Mishkin heard this discourse from Vis, Mishkin, the wise and prudent, by his eloquence adorned a letter to Ramin.

¹ *Lakhuari*, 193. R., 4, 161, 506, 566.

THE FIRST LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

A LETTER was written from the sorrow-stricken Vis to the merry and light-hearted Ramin. Instead of paper was used Chinese vellum,¹ for ink T'humbut'hian² (Tibetan) musk, an Egyptian reed,³ rosewater from Nisibrand, ink-horns⁴ of Saman⁵ aloe,⁶ the scribe himself a Kadj-like⁷ word-finder. His words were mingled with sugar and pearls. The parchment¹ was white and glittering like Vis's face, the ink black and fragrant like her hair, the pen straight like her form, and now resembling it in exceeding thinness ; the scribe like an enchanter,⁸ for the word in his mouth was sweet as sugar. He indited the praise⁹ of Ramin, and thus wrote on behalf of Vis :

" This letter from the dried-up cedar¹⁰ to the verdant, gaily grown-up cypress ;¹¹ from the darkened and waned moon to the shining moon, the beautifier of the heavens ; from the devastated and scorched vineyard to the newly-planted Paradise-like garden ; from the empty and worthless oyster-shell to the unopened pearl-shell ; from the sun set in sadness to the sun newly risen in the east ; from the faded and fallen leaf to the freshly blooming red rose ; from the dried-up¹² sea to the pearly | sea of Homain ;¹³ from the

¹ *Chinuri*, 151, 285; *petraticon*.

² *T'habit'h*, 26; *T'humbut'huri*, 223, 341. ³ *Egupturi calami*.

⁴ *Satsereli*, 266. ⁵ 337, *samindoruli*—? of the fields.

⁶ *Alva*, 78, 450. R., 77, etc. ⁷ *Kadj*, 245. ⁸ *Grdzneuli*.

⁹ *Keba sheaskha*. *Keba*, 71, 116, 132, 145, R., Introduction to English translation, p. xii.

¹⁰ *Nadzvi*—also pine, 289.

¹¹ *Cuiparozzi*, 313.

¹² *Damshrali*.

¹³ *Omain*, 253.

miserable and pitiable one to him who is happy in the fulfilment of every desire ; from her who will carry her love with her till the day of her death to the deserter and fickle one ; from the face that was beautiful and is now hideous to the face that increases (in beauty) every moment ; and from the heart burned with fire to the (heart) like Chinese¹ brocade ;² from the weeping eyes, sleepless day and night, to the eyes looking according to their desire ;³ from thine own good lover, ardent in heart, to the evil-doer at enmity with me ; from one wretched and stunned to the monarch powerful⁴ in all the land—I have written this letter, in such a state that my body is become weary of my soul and my soul of my body.

“ I burn in the fire of separation, and thou rejoicest in drinking and merriment. I am the treasurer of the treasure-house of love, and thou art the steward⁵ of hate. Now I adjure thee by my love and (our) union, also by God the Creator of heaven and earth I adjure thee, that thou read this letter through, that thou mayst know my sorrows and understand what I have said.

“ Knowest thou not, Ramin, that Fate(’s wheel) turns ? Man is sometimes sick, sometimes whole ; sometimes sorrowful, and sometimes joyful. For some there is life, be it evil or good ; but in the end there is death. For some, after death, there is judgment and retribution. In this world only a story remains. Our story is known to all, evil and good—all that we have done. Thou thyself knowest which of us two is more blameworthy, which | of us sought with more impurity his desire. I was the purest that thou couldst see on all the earth, for in purity I was like the dew of heaven, and in loveliness I was like a rose-leaf. No man had ever had his will of me, and by Fate no reproach had fallen on me. I was like a wild ass⁶ roaming in the plain, unapproachable by all. No hunter’s face had seen me. Thou wert my slayer and ravisher.

¹ *Chinuri*, 151, 284, 316.

² *Stavra*, 263. R., 672, 1414.

³ *Nebicrad*, 294.

⁴ *Mordchmuli*.

⁵ *Khhelisa up’hali*.

⁶ *Candjari*.

Thou didst set in my path a net¹ of impurity, and didst bind me. Now I am fallen alone into a pit,² and thou art gone away. Thou didst deceive me, thou didst seduce me, and now thou hast forsaken me. . . . Perjured one! Thine oath is like a passing breeze, thy vow is like running water, and it is past. Thou sayest: 'I will be united to Vis no more!' Then didst thou not swear to me also that as long as thou didst live thou wouldest never forsake me? Now, which shall I believe? Of thine oaths, which should appear the most solemn to me? Thine oath is like a snowstorm,³ and (thy) union with me like (? the finding of) a treasure. The fame of both is great in the land. Thou art like the air,⁴ thou turnest many ways. Thou art gold; both bad and good can get thee. If thou dost not stay with a constant lover like me, beside whom else wilt thou stay long?

"See how many ill deeds thou hast done. Thou hast brought dishonour on me and thyself; thou hast seduced me, the wife of a mighty monarch; thou hast made thy race and posterity a reproach; thou hast sworn falsely; thou hast forsaken a faithful and troth-keeping lover; thou hast gone away from me without regret or sorrow, and thou hast heaped reproaches on such a lover as none save thee possesses. . . . I am that Vis whose face is the sun, and whose hair | is musk. I am she whose face in fulness is like a fifteen days' moon, and whose lip is like immortality. I am that gracious one whose love is long-lived. I am the queen of beauties and sovereign of enchantresses. I find many a monarch better than thee, but thou canst never find one like me. Since thou hast forsaken me and left me, thou shalt find me with difficulty when thou returnest.

"Do not this thing, O Ramin! When thou repentest, thou canst find no balm save Vis. Do not this thing, O Ramin! When thou art sated with Gul, thou shalt not be able to get hold of Vis by bravery. Do not this thing,

¹ *Bade*, 261.

² *Ormo*, 275, 324.

³ *Buki*, 355. R., 55, 712, 965.

⁴ *Haeri*, 300.

O Ramin! Now thou art drunk, and in drunkenness thou hast broken thine oath. Do it not, O Ramin, for when thou art sober thou shalt remain wifeless and loverless! I see thee weeping before me, and with thy face fixed at the door of my palace (or 'lying on the threshold of the door of my palace'); thine enmity turned to love, seeking me, thou canst not find me. Since thou art sated of me and my lips, doubtless thou wilt soon have enough of Gul. When thou wast not submissive to me and didst not rejoice beside me, to whom else wilt thou be subject? Lovers cry with a loud voice: 'He whom Vis does not suit, let him receive death as his reward.'

"It will suffice thee as a sign of ill-luck that God gave thee a rose (?i.e., Gul), and then straightway bereft thee of the planted garden (i.e., Vis). He showed thee the darkened moon (Gul), and bereft thee of the brilliant sun (Vis). Thou boastest of having found one tree, and thou knowest not that thou no longer hast the vineyard. Surely thou dost not forget what sorrow and impatience thou wast in for my love? When thou sawest me in a dream thou didst think thyself a king. When my soul was given to thee, thou wast raised from death to life.

"Man's folly is this, that he soon forgets grief and joy. Thus thou didst say: 'I have lost my youth in the pursuit of her. | I have repented, and the pleasant world is become 288 bitter to me.' Then I thought this: 'I have planted thee as a sugar-cane, and then I looked for fruit, and gall showed itself as fruit.' If I remembered my griefs from thee, fire would come up even into my brain, and Djeon¹ would flow from mine eyes. How many griefs have I seen from thee? And at last it befalls me that thou diggest a well,² the nurse hast cast me in, and you are both seated pleasantly. Thou didst bring wood, the nurse lit the fire, and both burned me in it against my will. I know not if I should complain of thee or her, the fund of my woe is from both. How much hatred I have known from thee! Thou hast chained me with the fetters of separation, and hast lighted

¹ *Djeon*, 267, 431

² *Dcha*, 189.

a fire in my heart. Thou hast caused blood to flow from mine eyes. Thou hast set me in a lake of blood, and drowned me in Djeon.¹ My heart neither tells me to curse thee nor to cry out before God. May God never let me hear of thy grief—thy grief would pain me more than thee. Nevertheless, I shall thus write thee letters until the pen begins to write in blood or until I see thee, for may God not slay me until I have seen thee!"

¹ *Djeon*, 267, 431.

THE SECOND LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

“If I had the seven heavens¹ for paper, if I had all the stars as scribes, if the air of night were ink, if the letters (of the alphabet) were as numerous as leaves, sands, and fishes—if till the end I had hope and longing to see my lover—by thy sun, not even then could I write half I desire.

“I can fear nought save separation from thee; nought afflicts me save thine absence. Remaining afar from thee I have no rest. Sleep comes not to me; and if I slumber, thy face is before mine eyes. Without thee I am so wretched that I am pitiable even to my foes. When I do that which seems comforting to me, I shed streams of tears from mine eyes. This seems to me as if I extinguished fire with fire, and healed woe with woe. By reason of thine absence I sit mourning, and thou makest merry and rejoicest by the side of my foe. Mine eye must weep when it sees my lover’s bridle in the hands of a foe. It is as if thine absence were a fire which burns (everything) save suffering. None can sleep in the heat, and how can I repose being in a fire?

“I am that old cedar² which thy separation | has over- 290 thrown, withered, burned. That form of mine, which thou didst know straight as an arrow—thinking of thee has crooked it, it has fallen on a couch. When they come to sympathize, to see me, and to inquire after me—all those who sit around me—I am so wretched that they cannot look

¹ Seven heavens, R., 608, 1285; nine heavens, R., 899.

² *Nadzvi*, 284.

on me. They speak thus in their chatter, mocking me : ' Surely our invalid is gone away to the chase that she is not here.' Desire to see thee has so emaciated my form that those I see can no longer see me. Only by my sighing did they perceive that I lived ; and now through weakness not even sighing is possible to me. The only advantage which remains to me from thine absence is that if Death were to come and seek me for a year I am so shrunken by desire of thee that he could not find me in the bedding ; yet though by reason of thine absence I long for death, I am thus safe from it. Affliction for thy sake has become great, like mountains upon me, and the path of patience is made hard to me. May God not deliver me from this grief if I bear thine absence ! And how can that heart endure and be patient which is like the furnace¹ of hell, and neither has its blood in it nor anything else ? It is a lie that the soul lives by blood.² I have no longer any blood, and yet I live.

"O beloved ! as long as thou wert near, my form was a tree whose fruit was roses. Now it is fit that I should be burned, for everybody burns a barren branch. When thou didst depart, patience went from me. Since I cannot see thee, I find no joy in anything. In thine absence my will 291 has gone from me, and as long as thou art away | it will not return. Fate is so enraged against me as if I were bound to (her) chariot³ (wheel). Fate has brought me into confusion, like that of an army without a leader. Under grief the day has become night to me, as to a wild goat from fear of a greyhound.⁴ If I have wept at such a plight, marvel not. Let none reproach me. I am loverless, and the beloved of sorrows. I am without work, and have fainted from the works of love. I cannot rest without thee. Surely thou wert my life, for by thine absence thou hast sown in my heart thy love, and now I adjure thee to water it with the canal⁵ of joy.

¹ *Sakhmili*, R., 318, 326, 332, 775, 1135, 1247.

² *I.e.*, that "the blood is the life."

⁴ *Avaza*—coursing-panther, 30, 56, 277, 316.

³ *Etli*, R., 973.

⁵ *Ru*, 276.

"Look once again upon my face, for I doubt if thou ever sawest gold yellow like it. Though thou art my foe and deadly enemy, still thou wouldest pity me if thou sawest me. Though thou art a forsaker and fickle, when thou sawest my woes thou wouldest be grieved and oppressed.

"They tell me I am sick, and that I should seek a physician,¹ who would do me some good. I am slain by my doctor² and physician.¹ My physician has betrayed me and deceived me; by his treachery am I fallen sick! As long as I am thus pitiable I will seek thee as a remedy. Nought can avail me save the sight of thee. My heart can find no pleasure while thou art absent. My hope in God and Fate is not cut off, that they will show me my bright sun again. If the sun of thy face come, the night of my woe will be illumined. I am pitiable to my former foe, and surely I shall have thy pity. I have not sinned against thee in anything more grievous than I have done to my foes; and if thou readest this letter and dost not now pity me, | when thou knowest my woes, thou art wholly 292 impious and a deserter."

¹ *Mcurnali*, 280.

² *Ekimi*, 280.

CHAPTER L

THE THIRD LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

“O INEVITABLE object of my thoughts, when thou didst depart and go from me, thou didst take with thee my heart and reason. So I entreat thee, only this I ask: since thou hast gone from me, why didst thou desire a hostage¹ from me? For thy sake I have wholly given my soul, heart, rest, and patience. How indeed can I be a seeker of joy without these? My heart unwavering desires thee as the sick desire health. It cannot seek the love of any other. The heart which desires life from thee, how can it forget thee? As many as are the griefs it has seen from thee, so much art thou beloved like life itself. Though thou hast behaved impiously to me in folly and forsaken me, I cannot so be separated from thee. Now I think upon thee more, now I love thee more; and I cannot reproach thee even for the ill thou hast done. I will pursue and entreat thee until thou perceivest my righteousness and thine unrighteousness. Since thou art fickle, why shouldst thou reproach me for constancy of heart? My heart is like 293 copper² in water, and lies immovable on account of | fidelity of love for thee. Love cannot be removed from my heart, for it is firm like stone and iron; and if it were not thus weighty, then how, alas! could I bear so much grief and anger from thee? For because of thine ungodliness I am weary of life, as also of thine absence. The wine of love which I drank from thy lips, with it I am drunk with incurable drunkenness.

“When I look upon the sun or the moon, they remind

¹ *Mdzevali.*

² *Rvali*—bronze, R., 157, 547.

me of thy face; and when I look upon an arrow or a cypress,¹ a thousand times I do homage because of their likeness to thy form. Wherever I find a rose, I kiss it for its resemblance to thy cheeks. At the hour of dawn, weeping and sighing, when the breeze wafts the fragrance of violets and roses to me, I am comforted, for I say: Surely my love cometh, and his perfume strikes me? When I fall into a slumber,² I also gaze upon thy face. I find joy in this: sometimes I complain of thy deeds to thee thyself, sometimes I bewail thine absence to thee. When I sleep thou art friendly to me. When grief is added upon grief to me and I awake, why art thou mine enemy? Since thou shonest love to me when I am asleep, when I awake why dost thou cause me to suffer? In dreams thou art pitiful; when I awake why art thou so pitiless and soul-bereaving? Waking, melancholy I beseech thee. I call upon thee, and thou comest not, so that I must cry and weep. And when I fall asleep, ungracious thou comest and seest me, so that all the more impatiently I may desire thee. When thou wert near, that hour, and now, though but a moment in a dream, equally they rejoice me. Since thou wentest away darkness and light are become alike to me. Day and night are become one. Of thee only the image³ has remained in my heart, and of absence only 294 the grief of sickness. I so greatly desire thee that when I dream of thee I am contented and thank God.

“But my content is like a bird caught in a net,⁴ which has no more strength. I am like one cursed by my parents (with the words): ‘May God put far from thee whatever thou seekest.’ I am become so from love that even to dream of thee seems a joy to me. So afflicted, alas! is my heart that this even seems a glory to it, and it desires sleep. When I was near thee, then I was pampered,⁵ not expecting this woe. On account of that I did not sleep, and now I do not sleep because of the flow of blood from mine eyes by reason of separation. Behold! When did

¹ *Saro*, 810. R., 40, 229, etc. ² *Mimelulnes*, R., 189, 877, 1193.

³ *Sakhe*. ⁴ *Makhe*, 261, 264, 297. ⁵ *Vnasobdi*, 855.

the repose of sleep fall to my lot—then when I was in comfort,¹ and now that I am in tribulation? Now, the days that I passed in thy love are nought! When I sowed thy love, I watered it so much from mine eyes with sleeplessness that from my heart it came up to my head. My heart is like an oyster-shell, in which thy love's seed is sown, and no one can easily draw it forth. Surely God will not forsake me. And when thou seest me, mayst thou be unabashed; while I, because of my constancy, shall be unabashed and long-tongued,² not having suffered in vain so many griefs from thee."

¹ *Nebierobit'ha*, 285.

² *Ena grdzeli*.

THE FOURTH LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

“TELL me, O two weeks’ moon, why thou hast forsaken me, wherefore thou hast hastened to become my deadly foe? Though thine every wish befits thee, I, not only in this world, but also in eternity, desire no joy save thee. Thus they say to me: ‘O Vis, sigh not! Why art thou thus spent¹ for one fickle lover? A passion for a man is not forgotten save by love for another, and there are better that thou hast not tried.’ Those who say this to me know not that, however pure rosewater may be, to the thirsty spring water is of more avail. To him who has been struck in the liver by a snake, treacle² is better suited than red candy.³ However sweet sugar may be, to him who is poisoned with poison, an antidote is better.⁴ Since I see thee no more, in thine absence all who desire me look eagerly on me. Why should I seek another consolation for myself, or to whom should I give my heart instead of thee, from whom I have kept no part of myself, so have I belonged to thee? None shall be attached to me in thy place, and I shall have no gain to my heart from another. If I have no longer the power of my hand, however many pearls and jewels I may put on, it is unprofitable to me. Thou art the sun, and, sunless, my day has no light.

| “O chief of hosts, when I was near thee I was the 296 oyster-shell, and thou wert the pearl. It (the pearl) was taken out—it (the shell) has no longer honour; so no one

Gasula, 800. R., 750, 1125.

² *T'heriaci*.

³ *Tabarazi*.

⁴ The word for “poison” and “antidote” is the same (*tsamali*), thus exhibiting the homeopathic idea.

can put it (the pearl) in again. I, too, should, then, have sufficient sense not to set in my heart the love of any save thee. A man can find a substitute for everything in the world except his soul, and thou art my soul. Without thee, what substitute for thee can I seek? And even if I sought, when should I find such a moon which shines like the sun? Since I have been separated from thee, I have not washed my face and have not changed my raiment; for I used to be near thee, and I wished to keep the odour of thee.

“While I hold love for thee so fast, who else can find joy in me? My woeful heart, alas! is like a caravanserai.¹ The caravan² of thy love always stands inside, and if it does not leave room, what other caravaner² can find enough space? My form is become thin as a hair from grief, my heart hard as a stone from suffering. None plants a plant in a stone, lest both the trouble and the plant be wasted. As far as thou art away from me now, even so much thou art the reason of my life and the sight of mine eyes. Seek not in ignorance absence from me! Excepting me, no one can be found for thee, and, save thee, none for me. I am May,³ and thou art spring. Forsooth, can one do without the other? Thou art a partridge,⁴ and I the needful rock (to hide in). I am a sea by the flowing of my tears, and thou art a fish. Since it is impossible for us to be without each other, I wonder how thou couldst bear so long to be without me. Thou art a red rose, and I a yellow one. Thou hast blossomed forth in joy and I in grief. In one garden | there must needs be ever many kinds of roses. Come,⁵ mine own, dye my yellowness with thy ruddiness! Without thee even life will be dishonourable. What can there be honourable in the world without thee? By reason of thine absence mine eyes are always sleepless, and my heart is continually asleep, so that I no longer know my way.

¹ *Sakaravno p'hunduci*, 310.

² *Karavani*; *mokaravne*, 84, 275.

³ *Maisi*, 86, 92, 128, 320.

⁴ *Cacabi*, 205, 311. R., 227, 228.

⁵ *Moe*, 242, 271; *Marr.*, IV., l.b. Cf. R., 489, *move*.

“Thus they say to me: ‘Since he holds a star as his lover, hold thou the moon as thine. Die not through thinking on a fickle lover. His perfidy was manifested at the beginning. He has played thee false; have no further care for him.’ However true this may be, and thou hast denied God in regard to me, by thy sun I have not the power to do it. Neither can my heart feel love for any other save thee. And since I have so much happiness from my lover, why should I seek anything else? The grief and passion I have hitherto gone through is sufficient for me. I cannot endure another such torture, nor will I. I have not dyed my hands so fair a colour that I should desire (to dye) my feet also. I have seen no such profit from love that I should invest my capital in grief. I am become weary of all amorous and pretty people. I have written a binding charter.¹ I trust my heart to Fate, and to the remembrance of him who extinguished my fire.

“I am that bird, which for its prudence is called Zirak,² and now I am caught with both legs in a net.³ Like a merchant I embarked on the sea, confident that I could cross in safety and reach the realm of pearls. Long is my tale. I might tell it all, and I shall be drowned in the sea. I fear the waves⁴ on the voyage. I see no rest, | and my 298 stock-in-trade⁵ is lost. Now with uplifted hand I only pray to God for this, that He would deliver me from this fearful tempest, and as long as I live I shall never venture on the sea again. I am so consumed by thy wrath and love that I swear I will never let fickle men near me, nor shall I have hope in any. I take God alone as mine aid and helper, and to Him I commit myself.”

¹ *Sigeli* (? Latin, *sigillum*)—letter patent.

² *Zirak*—? pelican.

³ *Makhe*, 294, 324.

⁴ *Zuir'thi*.

⁵ *Sat'havno*, 316, 396, 436.

CHAPTER LII

THE FIFTH LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

“THE absence and expectation of a lover is very pleasant if fickleness and desertion be not added thereto. What though separation be bitter, surely it will be forgotten in the expectation (of reunion). Endurance of solitude is pleasant if there be hope of meeting again. For lovers to be continually together is blameworthy: first, because of others seeing them; secondly, because however much they love being with each other, some little thing will annoy them with one another. Sometimes they are sulky with each other, sometimes angry, sometimes they are displeased and sullen, sometimes they reproach each other with something else, and in love the worst of all things is this: to be sated of each other and to make an end of loving. I cannot thus 299 console my heart | when loneliness wearies my heart and makes me complain of separation from my lover. I say thus: ‘Be patient; thou hast seen grief, and the end of grief is always joy. After winter, with its poison, always comes summer. Surely thus it will be with me, to be united to him in the end! Now, thou hast been afflicted a year since thou expectest to see him a moment. If joy at his side for one day fall to thy lot, the grief of two years will be forgotten. Thou, O heart, art not worse than a gardener, and he, of whom thou thinkest, is not worse than a rose-tree. Look when he plants, how much grief he sees before the plucking! Day and night he is in trouble and preparation, he pricks his hand with the thorn in this hope: that the rose some time will bloom. Thus also a man tames a

nightingale,¹ he gives it food and drink; day and night he watches it, he adorns its cage² with ivory³ and beads,⁴ he beautifies it and fits it up, and for this he takes trouble for a year—that a sweet voice may come forth, and that he may hearken and rejoice his heart. Look at those also who go down to the sea, how many griefs and fears they endure without repose; they will become rich neither in sleep nor in strength. Sometimes they will fear for their lives, and sometimes for their possessions, but by hope they will bear all. They think: surely we shall gain by it. So also he who seeks turquoises⁵ and rubies⁶ continually digs in the rock, he has a stone and a pickaxe,⁷ his hands ache in this hope: surely I shall find a rare gem. By day he sleeps not for digging, and by night for watching.'

"Greed and expectation of luck afflict every human being, | and especially of seeing thee (*i.e.*, especially am I 300 afflicted by the desire to see thee). As long as the sun and moon rise, so long the hope of thee will not be cut off from me. Love in my heart is like a box-tree,⁸ winter and summer it is ever green; and love in thy heart is like a tree in winter, its fruit and leaves have fallen, and there only remains to thee a dry tree. But I am in this expectation: that such a spring will come and make it fresh again, that the leaf of constancy and the fruit of love may spring forth and give such regret for having forsaken (me), as I hope from God, if thou wilt no longer remember my heart.

"I am a dry branch, and thou art the merry breeze⁹ of spring; I, alas! am feeble and piteously forgone,¹⁰ and thou art rich, merciless, miserly, and indifferent. I weep day and night, I have no longer any resource but tears. Weak and piteous, I am so burned up, alas! that my only source of joy is weeping. I am like one sick and oppressed, who is afflicted, but whose hope of life is not cut off. I am like

¹ *Iadoni*, 185. R., 749, 1232, 1831.

² *Galia*. ³ *Dzvali*—bone.

⁴ *Mdzivi*, 889, also *vertebra*.

⁵ *P'herozi*, 110, 428. R., 468.

⁶ *Lali*, 5, 70, 196-7, 209, R., 204, etc.

⁷ *Tserakvi*—axe.

⁸ *Bza*—? palm (*Buxus sempervirens*).

⁹ *Haeri*, 286.

¹⁰ *Gasrul, gasuli*, 295. R., 750, 1125.

a man, solitary, sick, weak, fallen, who has the desire for home and kinsfolk, and has no power. Like him, I sit all the time on the road, and ask news of thee from passers-by. They say to me : 'Why dost thou ask ? Thy hope of him is cut off.' But I eternally am hopeful, and do not cut myself off from hope of thee—while life remains to me, if it be not wholly exhausted—nor from expectation of seeing thee. By passion I am bereft of patience. I am burned up all the more completely by thine anger, because the hope of seeing thee again sprinkles me with its water ; and unless I 301 be immortal, I alas ! for my days, for I can no longer endure a moment."

CHAPTER LIII

THE SIXTH LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

“O RAMIN, I have seen the day when thou wert not so high and haughty; thou wast not so self-assured, nor a speaker of such sharp words, nor wert thou so sullen and unapproachable. I have seen thee when thou didst sigh; thy sigh blackened the air, the smoke from thy heart darkened the moon. In humility thou wast like the earth by the roadside, thou wast as thine enemies and enviers desired to see thee; and did not I then behave as thou dost to me now? I was a thousand times more indifferent to thee, and treated thee with contempt. Thy soul was like hell by reason of its smoke. Thine eyes were like the sea with weeping; on the day when thou didst weep least, a water as great as Didjila¹ came forth from thine eyes.

“Now art thou become more mighty than Djimshed,² thou art become cockered and mountest to heaven. Doubtless thou hast forgotten that time when through passion thou hadst no more patience. Alas! that thou didst perceive my thought and my love for thee, and thereby didst | subjugate³ me. Why art thou thus bitter as gall 302 towards me, since thou knowest how to be sweet as immortality to others? Thou are soft-hearted⁴ to all, why art thou surly to me only? Thou hast found a thousand treasures full of fair things, what wonder if thou boast of this to a poor person? What does it avail thee if thou boast thyself, (for) I boast of thee more than thou thyself? Since thou art so boastful, subject thyself to me so as to render me

¹ *Didjila*, 198, 259, 261.

² *Djimshed*, 8, 130, 140, 375.

³ *Dzabuni*.

⁴ *Lmobieri*, 163. R., 454, 1182.

obedient to thee.¹ However much thy face is spring, and on thy cheeks the red rose ever blooms, remember also this, that the flower of summer bides but till harvest. This world is unstable. Draw not upon thy friends the bow of enmity, lest suddenly it snap and strike thee too. Though thy quiver² be full of arrows, draw not even one thence against a friend.

“ My heart is like meat roasting on the fire of separation. Since thou canst not take me off the fire, at least roast me gently. Do not to me what I have not done to thee, and treat me not dishonourably. Be not so unjust to me. Once I, too, was desired in love like thee, and I had not as much petting nor as much caressing as now thou hast. Pleasure will not remain to lovers when out of season they spare each other’s feelings. In pride thou hast raised thy head to heaven, and by thy great haughtiness the head will again be brought low. Thou art human, like me. Why dost thou wish to be inaccessible as an angel? If thou art high and splendid as the sun, at the hour of evening thou, too, must sink and set. I would wish to have a heart like thine in its inaccessibility—indifferent, fickle, and ignorant in its thoughts. The lord of such a heart is delivered from all woes, and | every man receives woe from such a heart. In face thou art desirable to those who gaze on thee, and thy heart is like adamant. It irketh me that I have such a firm heart, and am not like thee—fickle, forsaking, and forsown. May I not die of thinking of thee! If thou art a seeker after thy wickedness and a speaker of evil words concerning me, I am not a desirer of even one of these. I increase love, though thou increasest hatred. I strengthen the fire, and thou pourest water on it. When my mother bore me, with me she brought forth constancy; and when thy mother bore thee, she gave birth to inconstancy with thee. My heart gave me woe even with my fate, for it sought constancy in a fickle one. Now I am revenged on it as on an enemy, for

¹ “I will be thy subject only in case thou wilt be my subject.”

² *Capardchi*, 192, R., 93, 259, 855.

it can find nowhere escape from following in thy path. Now it is become to thee a mark, like a target to be aimed at, and thou shootest at it until pity and repentance come even to thee, and thou sayest: 'To the seller of misfortune this is fitting.' They praise the *rashi* (winged steed),¹ because in its flight it shot an arrow at Marav, and therefore they call it Djaangir.² Thou piercest me in heart and soul, from moment to moment, with a thousand adamant-tipped (arrows) from Gorab to Marav. This name in praise of prowess befits thee, not the *rashi*, for from more than a hundred stadia³ thou didst shoot an arrow to my slaying, and equally distant thou didst annoy thy lover.

"What a merciless and hard heart is thine! By thy so great wrath thou hast made my face yellow and burned my heart. I wonder at nothing but this: that in spite of so much trouble and bitterness unceasingly from thee, yet I am not consumed away. | Since I am neither iron nor 304 stone it is a marvel that I have borne this (state) in which I am. Thus they say to me: 'Weep not; thou art fallen sick from too much weeping, and art become thin as a hair. This becomes one whose hope of seeing the beloved is cut off! But dost thou not know how to bring him?' Surely from my rain will come forth fruit, from my tears the beloved will come. When spring comes, the garden is clad with roses. Surely my beloved will come, and I shall give my life for him. And when he goes away from me, instead of joy I will pour pearls from mine eyes, instead of gold and carbuncle,⁴ I will scatter mine eyes and life. Surely God will have mercy on me, and I shall see my beloved one day."

¹ *Rashi*. Cf. Merani (Pegasus), R., 96, 201.

² Jehangir—lord of the world. I do not understand the reference.

³ *Edji*, 254, 263, 267.

⁴ *Ant'hraci*.

THE SEVENTH LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

“BEAUTIFUL object of my thoughts! Unfeelingly thou hast ravished me. Tell me, what sayest thou? What hast thou decreed for me? What care hast thou for the welfare of my soul, which, thou knowest, cannot survive without thee? Thou hast made thy horse to gallop, and hast left me a stranger in a strange land, sick, without a physician. Thou takest no heed to my exile, and now I even know that thou dost not think of it at all, because thou art forsworn and fickle. Hast thou no pity? Dost thou not fear God? Wilt thou not place a plaster on the sore wound? Wilt thou not say: ‘How melancholy she is without me, since her heart is drowned in waves of blood?’ Love and compassion are necessary, for I am dying without thee, and dost thou not feel this? Have I complained to thee, or have I, when wretched, complained of thee? How does thy heart deceive thee, O beloved, that thou shouldst plague thy love like an enemy? Was it not sufficient grief to me that thou didst depart? In addition to this, why didst thou prefer another before me and wed her to wife? I am pondering over these woes, and thou art he who, away from me, rejoicest with another wife. I am she who am now despised by thee, and thou art he to whom I am become 306 irksome. Thou, who wert formerly my lover, | no longer rejoicest (in me). Thou didst long for a sight of me like the hart for the waterbrook.¹ Am I not still she who seemed to thee thy sun, and in this fleeting world thy

¹ *Vi'ha tsqarosat'huis iremi*, R., 835, 1564 (*tsqarosat'hvis vit'h iremsa*).

comfort, joy, and hope? And art thou not still he who became a corpse for me, and wert faded like a falling leaf? Am I not she who gave thee life and taught thee happiness?

“Now, why am I she and thou no longer he?

“In thee is hatred and in me is love. Wherefore hast thou become faithless to me? In what hast thou known me to be an evil-doer that thou art become weary of me? My passion¹ has become an easy thing to thee. Thou hast forgotten my affection.² That burden is lightened to thee which thou borest when thou wert drowning in a sea of trouble, and its waves tossed thee to and fro. Thou hast wedded this other wife because a drowning man lays hold of everything that comes in his way. Therefore I marvel not at this thing thou hast done. Many a man lays out on the tray³ sugared and honeyed things, and eats sour things. Formerly the drinking of wine pleased thee, and now through drunkenness thou no longer desirest wine. But when thou shalt see wine thou shalt desire it, and, save wine, there is no medicine for him who has drunk too much.⁴

“Dear as one’s soul is a former lover. Choose not another in her place. The old road is safe; forsake it not. If thou hast a new one, keep her; but forsake not the old one. Love to the heart, a precious jewel to the eyes, the older these are the better, because the colour of a new gem soon changes, and a gem whose colour is gone is to be compared with a stone. A thousand stars are not like one sun, nor for a man are all his members as useful as one 307 head. A thousand lovers are not so desirable to a man as his first love. As I cannot find one fickle like thee, even so (canst thou not find) a lover constant in love like me. Thou art the sun and I am the moon, and these two befit one another for ever. Think not that thou art thus far from me and shinest like a sun. Thy light will also be from me, and, however far thou mayst roam, at last thou shalt come back to my side.

¹ *Midjnuroba.*

² *Siqvaruli.*

³ *Tabla.*

⁴ Cf. 821.

"O hard heart, arise and set out, grieve me no more henceforth, and do not anger thyself. Do not be angry with one who will trust thee and miss thee to the end. Do not stay with her (Gul), because thou knowest the bitterness of life for her without thee. Thou shouldst have more pity on her who is most thine own (property). Come, for we shall be as pleasant henceforth as knowledge to the soul and light to the eyes. Thine absence is a hard rock, and nought save the sight of thee will break it. I cannot bear to be without thee. I shall not recall the past, and thou shalt not mention the cause. It matters not that thou hast forsaken me, and hast lopped the tree of love; again thou wilt graft it with unity of heart, the fruit even will come better forth on the grafting. Begin to seek love from the beginning, and be not false to my heart, that God may not hold thee guilty."

THE EIGHTH LETTER. OF VIS TO RAMIN

“O TEARFUL clouds of spring, come and learn from me to weep. But if but once ye rain like my tears the earth will be laid waste. Such a stream of tears ever pours from me, and yet I am ashamed that I have not so many as I would. In this grief a hundred times as many tears befit me. But I will be emptied in soul.¹ When sometimes I pour forth blood and sometimes water, when I have no longer these two, with what else can I afflict myself save plucking out mine eyes, for mine eyes themselves desire a sight of thee, my tongue (desires) converse with thee, and mine ears to hearken to thy words. Since I have not even one of these, what shall I lay hold on, or why do I wear out my life with weeping? Perchance I shall make the earth a sea, I will sigh so that I crumble away stone. I am thankful to my tears that they do not forsake me afflicted, they have not fled from me like patience, they are not bloody to me like my heart. At such a time lovers are necessary to a man! Since I am weary of all, if that patience should once not be mine, and if it be my fate to have it no longer, even that would slay me. My heart | has been seized by mis- 309 chance, and therefore patience says to it : I am a branch of Paradise, why art thou planted in hell? O heart, thou art like hell, full of fire and smoke, therefore have I thus quickly fled from thee. O heart, life is become hateful to thee, why dost thou complain to me of lack of patience? At all times patience is a glory; but thus, from love, endurance by the afflicted is rather a shame. Since I have not the power of

¹ ? for *sulad* read *srulad*—completely.

patience, I will no longer strive for it nor desire it. Leave me, that I may die in impatience.

“O joy, thou art passed from me; without thee what can patience on my part be called, or what is its name? Should I be patient without thee, then it would be inconstancy and abandonment on my part. I belong to thee soul and self, and thou knowest, by thy God, whatever thou wilt that thou mayst do with me. To that lover who is beloved of some one a thousand souls and lives seem nothing. Thus should be the love of man and the origin of passion. Why should my woe be increased by thine anger? Pity befits, not ill-will. How very desirable seems to me that time when we were together and rejoiced. May the good fortune of my joy awake, and may the hope of my foes be diminished. The way¹ of Fate is ever thus, for it cuts pleasure with the sword of enmity. When suddenly the light of mine eyes departed, from that time mine eyes weep blood. I have sighing as a consolation, and sorrow has taken up its abode in my heart. By my weeping and sighing we ourselves are burned.² Rejoice us with tranquillity. We have seen lovers in the land, but none afflicted, pitiful, and restless like me.

310 How should I have | repose, since my fair lover has thus forsaken me, for he has left me piteously alone like a shepherd’s fire in the plain? He came no more hither to me; he left me alone, despised, as caravaners³ leave an inn.⁴ It did not suffice him to leave me and go away. He married a wife and forsook me.

“Now, if I sigh, I have reason for it, since this has befallen me from a lover in whom I trusted. I entrusted my heart to thee in confidence, and I have seen nought but perjury from thee. How could thy heart cause me such grief and pain? Did I not love this my nurse as my mother? Did not she look upon thee as all the world to her? Did not thy form seem to her a cypress?⁵ Did she not rejoice in thee? Did not the sight of thee seem to her hope and

¹ *Kheli*=the function, habit, custom, behaviour.

² ? *Dagitsvavt’h*. The passage seems to be corrupt.

³ *Mokaravneni*, 275, 318. ⁴ *P’hunduci*, 296. ⁵ *Saro*, 293.

power? Thou didst insult her on my account. Beautiful one, even this reproach is enough that thou shouldst be called evil-doer by all who know. What would anyone say who read this our letter, and learned of this which has befallen us? Would they not say this: that she was so good, and forsaken because she sought so much love from a fickle man? And, doubtless, they would say of thee: he is such a bad man and evil-doer, because he acquired her for himself, and has thus abandoned his own.

“I have finished this letter, though I have not told a hundredth part of my complaint. I have great complaint against Fate, one thousandth part of which I cannot tell. My complaint cannot have an end, and by this discourse my desire will not be fulfilled. Before I had told thee all this an evil weariness would have overcome me. I will go and entreat Him Who Himself sees. I will go to the door of His palace, which needs nor chamberlain¹ nor porter; I will 311 entreat light from Him, and not from thee, and will seek comfort from Him, not from thee. That door which He has closed He also will open to me. I am cut off from hope from all, but not from Him, for save Him I have no strength.”

¹ *Edjibi*, R., 141.

CHAPTER LVI

THE NINTH LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

“I HAVE a heart full of fire and a soul full of smoke, a form wasted to the thinness of a hair, and a face tinted yellow as gold. Every night I lay my face on the ground before God, and thus I bewail my fate: my crying mounts to heaven; the stars hear my sighing. I weep like a cloud in spring; I cry out like a rock partridge.¹ I am washing out with my tears the darkness of night. I make the earth into clay² as far as the back of the fish upon which the world stands,³ and I am agitated like the sea by the wind. I tremble like a willow⁴ in the breeze.⁵ I sigh so pained in heart that the moon loses its way in the sky for pity of me.

312 So much smoke rises from my sad heart | that from mountain to mountain dark smoke and cloud lies.

“Thus shamed, oppressed, wretched, woe-stricken, with weeping eyes and sallow face, dusty lips, I am saddened, and say: ‘O Creator, without beginning, merciful, Autocrat,⁶ mighty and meek! Thou art the strength of the weak, Thou art the Help and Succour of the poor and oppressed. Save Thee, there is no one to whom I can entrust my secret. I beseech Thine aid. Thou knowest how I am afflicted. Thou knowest how my tongue is tied. I entreat Thee, and from Thee I seek solace. Save my soul from the abyss.⁷ Lift from my heart the fetters of

¹ *Cacabi*, 205, 296.

² Var., *davst'khkri* (dug out) for *davat'hikhheb*.

³ The Georgian popular belief is that the earth stands upon the back of a fish.

⁴ *Tirip'hi*, 23, 36, 92, 349.

⁵ *Niavi*, 318.

⁶ *Nebiero*.

⁷ *Pirt'hagan*—from the jaws.

separation. Turn his hard heart to love. Make him to remember his former love for me; make him have pity on me. Give him such a burden as afflicts me, that it may be even heavier than a mountain. Either lead him hither to me by this, or lead me thither by Thy mercy. Open to us a road through inconstancy. The road of grief will be blocked when I see him. Guard him, O God, from all mischances, and give him no grief save my love. Make him endure no annoyance; and if Thou lettest me see him no more, I have had enough of life without him. Now, may my days be added to him. If I am to be separated from him, it is better that I should have no life, and that he should have two lives.'

"My desired one, how long shall I bewail, how long shall I sigh piteously, how long shall I weep? I can no more. | I can write no more. What I have to say to thee 313 is inexhaustible. But however much I prolong it, none will pity me, because my heart is burned by thee. If I complained of thy deeds to the rocks, they would begin to weep like me. I am pitied by stones, but I am not pitied by thy heart. The very stones have more tenderness than thy heart.

"Alas! my so pitiable heart is like a stone in this: that the steeliness of thy heart has shattered it. This (letter) sends greeting to the fair of form with the heart of steel; sends greeting to those jacinths¹ in which are strung two-and-thirty seed²-pearls; sends greeting to those narcissi³ by reason of which I am continually sleepless; sends greeting to that cypress⁴-tree which has destroyed my fame for patience; sends greeting to that full moon which has eclipsed the moon of my fate; sends greeting to that fruitful tree which has dried up the branch of my fortune; sends greeting to that smiling rose for which I am ever weeping and tearful-eyed; sends greeting to that powerful

¹ *Iagundi*—i.e., Ramin's lips. R., 276, etc.

² *Martzvali*—grain, seed, crumb, 824, 848.

³ *Nargisi* (i.e., Ramin's eyes), 83, 86, 156, 354. R., 151

⁴ *Cuiparosi*, 284.

sovereign, a sun doing unrighteousness; sends greeting to the crown¹ of knights² and the menace of heroes; sends more greetings to him than the sands of the sea, the rain of heaven, and all that the world contains. And greet thy heart, though it has forsaken me, from my pitiable heart made melancholy by it, with as many greetings, longings, and homages. And may God give thy heart love for me, and to me the sight of thee loving me as was thy wont of yore."

¹ *Guirguini*, cf. 325. ² *Tzkhenosani*, 354—horseman, chevalier.

THE TENTH LETTER OF VIS TO RAMIN

ONCE more Vis commanded her secretary to write a letter to Ramin. So the secretary wrote a letter according to her piteous grief. He was peerless in mind and skilled in tongue, and whatever cunning was his he used it all and exhausted it.

Then Vis stroked the letter on her hair and her mouth, and thus made it so fragrant that at half a day's distance the odour of musk from her letter was perceived by man. Then she called Adina, and said :

“ Adina, thou art beloved by me like the faith.¹ Hitherto thou hast been my servant and slave.² Now thou shalt be my beloved brother and equal to myself, for we are one soul and one body. I desire thee to go to Ramin, who is to be preferred above, and is more inevitable than, my soul. I adjure thee tarry not; go swift as lightning. Alas! I am troubled. Present this my letter, and report my message in its entirety. Strive to hasten. Henceforth I await thee. | I count every day and moment till thy return. Do 315 it in such a way that no living man may see thee. Carry from me longing, desire of seeing him, and greetings more numerous than the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea and all things created by God, to the ravisher of my heart, Ramin, saying :

“ ‘ O worthless,³ worthless one! Despicable in worthlessness, oath-breaker, godless, and false! I have suffered from thine evil-doing so many woes that I have desired

¹ Play on the Persian word *din*—faith.

² *Qma*.

³ *Aramo*—? play on name Ramin.

death a thousand times, and had no thought to remain alive. Why hast thou forgotten so many vows which thou didst make to me? and dost thou not remember the countless oaths which thou so often didst swear to me? Thy vow and the wind are alike, thine oath and the cloud equally constant. By thy fickleness thou hast done, alas! to my wretched heart, become distracted through thee, that which a foe would not do to a foe. Let God be the arbitrator. But think not to do so much evil to me. God knows that it is more than enough, even for thine own sake; thou art become a byword and a reproach. Since the time when thou didst this deed, thenceforth they will write in books how thou didst forsake thine old mistress—didst break thine oath and become enamoured of an enemy. Mortal horror,¹ as of an asp,² struck my heart that thou hadst chosen another instead of me, and wedded her as 316 wife. | Where wilt thou find a lover faultless as I am, or a monarch parentally tender like Moabad, or a land for pleasantness like Khuarasan, or a city like Marav for strength? Hast thou forgotten so much that is good, and how every wish of thine was fulfilled by Moabad at my request? Moabad was sovereign in name only—all else was thine. I had power over his treasures, and whatever was good in them, all was thine. The best horses, whichever thou desiredst, none withheld them from thee, nor any kind of trappings. Also the hunting panthers,³ the falcons,⁴ and dogs were under thy command, and, of course, the armies. Thou wert girded with the royal girdle.⁵ If it was not Chinese⁶ brocade woven in gold, thou didst not wear it. Thy servants, beautiful as moons, stood before thee adorned, and lying at thy side on a couch of pearls and gold was thy sun-faced, whole-hearted Vis. Such a situation, such a state, and such a lover thou hast forsaken as are to be desired and longed for by every creature! Who that is lord of his reason would do this that

¹ *Zari*—alarm, 320, also “venom,” P. ² *Aspiti*, 122, 192, 320. R., 1209.

³ *Avazani*, 291, 335.

⁵ *Sartqeli*.

⁴ *Kori*, 199, 419. R., 355, etc.

⁶ *Chinuri*, 285.

thou hast done to thyself? I do not know what profit will accrue to thee in lieu of so much. Thou canst not gain interest, thou hast dissipated thy capital.¹ Now, lacking both capital and interest, thou art left wretched. From thy manhood a thousand treasures full of precious gems hast thou taken away, and now thou seekest for even one groat² in a thousand misfortunes. Thou art so simple that thou art left empty by every man, and knowest not, indeed, what compensation thou hast. Thus God has given thee, as it were, instead of pure refined gold, rotten lead³ and copper.⁴ I marvel if thou hast indeed intelligence, that thou shouldst treat thyself thus. For such a rose (*i.e.* *Gul*) who cannot be long | with thee—for her sake 317 how couldst thou forget all this? Why didst thou prefer one rose to a garden full of the light of thornless roses?⁵ ”

When Adina heard the message, he took the letter and immediately ordered the stud⁶ to be brought. He selected sleek, swift, good steeds, easy to ride, in the plain rapid as goats,⁶ in the rocks running like wild sheep,⁷ and in the water swimming like fishes. He took with him men swift and untiring, he set out, and did not rest a single moment. So quickly he travelled that he went in two weeks from Marav to Gorab.⁸

When Vis, the heart-ravisher, had sent Adina, burnt in heart, she lamented so pitilessly that though a listener might have had a hundred hearts, he would have remained without heart. She said :

“ Whither has gone my happy fortune? Where is that sun hidden which was always near me? I see no longer, because the sun and the moon have forsaken me. Since the light of day is from the sun and of night from the moon, therefore am I sick; | even for this I sigh and am feeble, 318 because the darkness of night has no dawn for me. Seas

¹ *Sat'havno*, 298, 896, 436. ² *Dangi*, 145.

³ *Tquia*, R., 5.

⁴ *Spilendzi*.

⁵ *Djogi*, R., 54.

⁶ *T'hkha*, 420. R., 75, etc.

⁷ *Arni*.

⁸ The following passage, to the end of the chapter, is found in only two of the four manuscripts used for the printed edition of the text. It is evidently spurious.

flow from my darkened eyes, for sight has forsaken mine eyes, and joy my heart. I have done ill to none, so that evil should not befall me. Now, why has my fate put me in such a state that it is as if a caravan¹ from moment to moment was coming down on me, striking with the sword?² I fear lest my heart by the fulness of grief should steal away, as a pomegranate³ rots in its fulness; and that to a heart captive to so much grief neither a breeze⁴ of solace will enter, nor a sun of light; it is always cloudy and cannot bear the dew. And I have no rest from it. My love is an unskilled scribe, and it writes upon my sallow face with blood its woes and the multitude of its sufferings. What planet⁵ will extinguish this diversity?⁶ What fate will extinguish this lack of patience? Love has kindled a fire in my heart, and burned my heart with heart's desire. Have pity, ye who hear my story. I was oppressed, and therefore have I cried aloud heedlessly. When a thing of so large proportions happens there is no way of hiding it. If through ignorance so great a thing happened to my heart, then for this am I to be pitied of all men. Why did love so boundless find me and bereave my body of youth, joy, and soul? If the effect of love was lacking on me, this brand⁷ suffices me. None can exact from me more than separation, for while I live my soul is marked. Where art thou mine own who art straight as an arrow? See me bent like a bow by longing for thee. When I remember thine absence and what

319 thou hast done to me, | my heart is tied in knots.⁸ I am no longer she whom thou sawest; thou couldst no longer recognize me; yet thou hast not yet taken pity on me. How long shall I beat my mouth? How long shall I make the pomegranate³ flower violet? I sigh every moment like a harpist.⁹ My heart is my foe, and how can I bear the constant presence of my foe? My heart is filled with fire! Sigh, O soul, since thou art worthy of this, and in this world see hell. This, apparently, is God's will, that I should continu-

¹ *Karavani*, 310, 451.

² *Dashna*.

³ *Brotseuli*, 318, 319.

⁴ *Niavi*, 311.

⁵ *Etli*.

⁶ *P'heradoba*.

⁷ *Daghi*.

⁸ *Damenascvis*.

⁹ *Changisa nutribi*.

ally sigh and thou burn. What pleasure has it in such a state that I am continually in a stream of tears and thou in fire? I turn the world into a sea by mine eyes. I take ship and mingle with the fishes, wrapped in a bloody garment. I have sent a letter to him on whom I think; shall it be that he will read it or not? Will he understand my heartburnings or not? Will he pity me, write me an answer, and give pleasure to my heart? Oh! what shall I do? What worse than this can befall a lover, that day and night I should have no other joy but to wait for a letter? And I have doubts of even this from my forsaker. . . . Oh! the time of tenderness and pleasure is past for me, when I had my will and caressed! Now my lover has put an end to this, so that a letter seems a solace to me; and if ever I sleep, to see him in dreams is a joy to me. Alas that time when the discourse of a lover is wasted on a letter, and the sight of him for a dream! I am more worthy of pity than all other lovers, because I have no sleep through thinking of thee, although I waking dream. On the other hand, I cannot expect a letter from him who forsook me unjustly, for he has become weary of me. Oh Fate, I adjure thee! | Why am I left thus, that from such luxury such dis-ease 320 should befall me from the lover, and instead of pride, humiliation? What has he given me in place of all my bounty and joy of youth? Such impatient love? Why have I not drunk the horror¹ of the asp²-serpent? Why was I not given to wild beasts to be devoured? If he has brought me into such a state and loss of power over my heart, why did I not die when I was in a good state? Death is more pleasant in the time of joy than keeping life to the end in dishonour. Alas, O Fate! Thy deed is always this, to add grief to the disheartened. Thou destroyest thy pleasure and theirs in that thou separatest lovers; thou dost not bring fulfilment, and makest them hopeless. That cloud which rains upon the disheartened rains also upon stones. The wind, which is continual, wafts the scent of roses to men, but it never wafts the perfume of my lover to

¹ *Zari*, 815.

² *Aspiti*, 815.

me. I have not done so great evil that the winds and the clouds also should become my foes. From that cloud the rain of May¹ falls on him—it does not even drop a tear on me. Here the land is joyful and the trees blossom, the earth is clad in many-coloured flowers and herbs; but my flower and joy is far from me as hope of life. The ground now even excels me—its spring and beauty are come, but mine are no more." In this fashion she lamented and continually wept.

¹ *Maisuri*, 86, 296.

RAMIN THINKS ON VIS

WHEN Ramin had tarried a time with Gul, after his wont he was sated. He grew weary of her presence; his customary inconstancy returned. When he was sated and drunken, the rose of their joy faded; the wind of their love stood still; their ship met bad weather. When the bow of their affection was broken, the arrow of their passion was shattered;¹ the diamond² of their garment of joy grew old; the spring of their pleasure dried up. When a pitcher³ is new it holds water well. So was it with Ramin's stay at Gorab. Ramin's passion was like a greedy man: merrily and deeply he drank wine from Gul. As long as he was sober he desired; then in his drunkenness his affection departed. When a man drinks wine to excess, even if it were to give him immortality, he would not soon desire it again.⁴ Thus Ramin was somewhat sated of Gul's presence. He had not seen Vis for a long time, and the thought of her and her presence was again brought to his mind.

He had gone out to the fields to sport in early spring, and saw newly-sprung flowers of many colours. Earth, trees, fields, gardens, all blossomed and adorned themselves. A man who was before him held in his hand a bunch⁵ of violets,⁶ and I offered them to Ramin. When 322 Ramin saw this nosegay⁵ he remembered that day when he swore fidelity with such oaths to Vis, when they sat upon

¹ *Dailetsa*, 66. R., 1016.

² *Almasi*, 418. ? *almagi*—chain armour.

⁴ *Cf.* 806.

⁵ *Cona*.

³ *Coca*, R., 1072.

⁶ *Ia.*

Shahinshah's throne, and after the first vow Vis gave him a bunch of violets, and said : " Learn this as a token from me : wherever thou seest a fresh violet think on this day and vow ! Mayst thou be thus blue and downcast and shortlived if thou breakest thine oath or deceivest me. And I will take the rose as a token that I may be as shortlived and distasteful to God when I break my oath to thee ! " ¹

When Ramin thought on that time and that day, it seemed to him as if the world were darkened. The cloud of spring is black, and rains so heavily that it makes torrents to flow. So was it with him when his heart was darkened, so many tears flowed from his eyes that they formed new seas. When he remembered his former pains he had endured for Vis, Vis's affection for him, and at that time his whole-heartedness for her, and the breaking of his oath, Ramin said : " What have I done ? In forsaking Vis I have abandoned everything : God, religion, oath, and soul."

Passion again overmastered him, and affection for her was renewed. When the sun comes forth from a cloud it has then greater heat. So was Ramin's love renewed. Passion vanquished him more even than at first. He acknowledged his fault, and vowed to God to be a lover to her again. The renewing of love and desire overcame him ; he had no power to go on, and his colour paled. He turned aside from the road, and dispersed the troops. When he was left alone he dismounted from his horse, broken-hearted and pale ; tears of blood flowed from his eyes ; with longing and eagerness to see her, like one in an ague fit, he shivered and burned. He cursed Fate and his heart that he had never had rest from them :

" Sometimes love makes me sick of my country ; sometimes it estranges me from my comrades ; sometimes it makes me transgress against my friend, and makes me behave in an unfriendly way ; sometimes absence can protect me, it maddens me, and makes me weep. O pitiable

¹ Cf. R., 916.

and darkened heart! How long wilt thou be powerless like a drunken man? On the edge of grief and joy canst thou not make a choice? To thee sea and land seem alike. Thou thinkest summer and winter are one. If thou sittest upon brocade¹ or upon the ground, in thy folly all please thee equally. Whatever thou seest, in thy lightness thou desirest everything equally; thou dost not keep to one thing; in ignorance thou actest in divers ways. Thou art a byword for mischance in the land, and with the soldiers a synonym for sorrow. Thou art the abode of mischance, and therefore the door of hope is shut against thee by all. Thou camest to Gorab, thou brakest vow and oath, thou didst assure me of liberation from Vis, and thou couldst not deliver me. I am a fool that I went to sea with thy wind. Thus thou didst say to me—wed a wife and forsake Vis. Fear not me, I shall be accustomed to absence, and shall no longer desire; I shall use patience in woe. Aha! I deprived myself of life through thy hope. In place of her I have sought another. I have broken my vow, and am become hopeless through my inconstancy. Now thou hast left me drowning in the sea, and thou art set upon the fire of separation. Thou didst say, 'I will be patient.' Now, why has impatience come nigh thee? I repent me that I hearkened unto thee. Why did I give the reins² into thy hands? Why did I trust in thy discretion, since self and thou, too, have become dishonoured? And now I see that thou art more firmly bound in woe. O heart, thou didst find a seed³ like a foolish bird, and didst not at all perceive the net.⁴ O heart, thou didst break the oath of the soul and the lover, and hast made me according to the wish of my foes. Why was I indolent? why did I hearken to what thou saidst? It is fitting that I should be thus afflicted; woe is the portion of the stubborn, and the fool deserves grief. Such melancholy befits me, since I have extinguished the candle of my heart with mine own hand. Such madness befits me wretched, since I have cut

¹ *Stavra*, 826. R., 456.

² *Sadave*, 832.

³ *Martzvali*, 813, 843.

⁴ *Makhe*, 297.

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off the branch of joy with mine own hand, and with mine own hand I have dug a pit¹ for myself, and have cast down into it hope of solace. Now, what shall I do? How can I ask pardon from the ravisher of my soul? How can I show my branded heart to her? With what can I present her for shame? What converse can I devise? What excuse can I give for leaving her, or how can I deceive her while I live? Even if I were to cast off my shamelessness now and heat once more frozen love, still I have no means of enduring. I have no longer respect for my heart, by which so many griefs have come upon me, in which even now I am. Miraculous and unending evidently were the planet, day, and hour when I became enamoured, and love came down into my heart, and I myself with mine own hands slew the joy of youth. Alas! | alas! my griefs date from the time when love made a coward of me. Now, I know that cowardice is the law of lovers, but why should it overtake me beyond all others? Since then, I remember not myself happy in my affairs. Sometimes a stranger in a foreign land; sometimes mad, and vainly wearied from love. Roaming is to me a solace, and death the releaser from woes. The happiness of my good fortune has abandoned me, and my wretched fate suffers me no repose. May God not create another man with my fate, and upon² my planet may child not be born to woman. May none ever be so mercilessly helpless."

Thus and in this manner, lengthily, Ramin bemoaned himself and wept. The soldiers having departed, he came to reason, and went home too. The dust of woe was upon his face; he wiped his tears.

Behind him his father-in-law, Rap'hed, had come, he lent his ear to this lament and weeping of his son-in-law. Ramin, deprived of heart like a madman, did not know that anyone had overheard his discourse. Rap'hed heard all, came in, inquired for Ramin, and said:

"O crown of cavaliers,³ why art thou always like one mourning? What desire hast thou that God does not

¹ *Ormo*, 286, 889.

² ? under.

³ Cf. 313.

grant thee? Why dost thou ever think even of sadness? Why dost thou act foolishly and complain of happiness and well-being? Thou art that Ramin who is chief and desired of all youths, and thy brother is monarch of all monarchs. Although thou dost not yet sit on the throne in thy youth, [thou art more honoured and renowned than all monarchs. 326 Thou hast youth and peerless bravery, thou art royal and awaiting a kingdom, and what better than this dost thou wish? Complain not idly of Fate. An unjust complaint brings ill-luck. He who despises a brocade¹ couch and thanks not God for it, him will God make to lie on an earthen couch.”

The heart-sore Ramin thus replied :

“A healthy man is outside the woes of the sick, and therefore thou art not to blame in speaking thus. Thou knowest not my grief, and therefore when I sigh thou thus reproachest me. There is no pleasure like knowledge and companionship, nor is there any woe worse than separation and wandering.

“PARABLE (*Araci*) : When a garment is rent it cries aloud, and when the twig of a vine is cut off it weeps.

“I was more foolish earlier, because separation from my friends and kinsfolk did not cast me down. Gorab is thy city and birthplace ; all thou seest are thy friends and kins-folk. Thou always sittest beside thy friends and kinsfolk, and art not like me a stranger in the city and country of another. However much kingly power a stranger may have, still he grieves to see no familiar (face). Every man desires a world for himself, and every thing most pleases him who knows it. Though joy is a good thing, one friend is more pleasant than a thousand joys. Whatever is good in that it is desirable to oneself, so it is to one’s friends. Many a time have I envied thee. When thou comest back from travelling, or from hunting, thy kinsfolk and connections,² [wife and children joyfully embrace thee, 327 and you are bound one to the other as by a hobble-rope.³ Here I have no kinsman, no friend, nor ravisher of my

¹ *Stavra*, 323.

² *Mzakhali*.

³ *Toilo*, 378.

heart, nor child. I was once like thee, light-hearted, I led a pleasant life in the company of my kinsfolk and friends. Then, when I was in mine own house, it was pleasant for me too; when some mischance from love befell me and my friends reproached me, even the injury of their reproach pleased me, because the narcissus was drunk and the rose was willing. Sometimes I was heartsore from the narcissus, and sometimes grieved by the rose. How pleasant was her tenderness, and how pleasant was her wrath and caprice! If one week she hid her face from me, she made a pitiful prisoner, and a thousand vows (of mine) in exchange for one pardon would have given me pleasure. How pleasant was it when I complained a thousand times a day of her temper, then repented of what I had done, and praised her with a thousand eulogies,¹ and mouth gave back caress to mouth! How pleasant was our behaviour in its diversity: sometimes tenderness² and sometimes sulkiness, sometimes anger and sometimes playfulness, sometimes smiles and sometimes tears, sometimes embracing and stroking of hair, and sometimes desiring to renounce even religion because of her wrath! If I suffered torture from the shrewish glances of her narcissi, afterwards I received compensating joy from her roses. Nought save love oppressed me. He who has the company of his beloved and such tenderness as I, it is not fitting that he should have afterwards heartsighing nor backache. As long as I was light-hearted, I was so that at catching the ball³ at my will I excelled all 328 lovers. From my beloved's | mouth I had roses in bundles,⁴ and from the hair of my beloved I had a mass⁵ of musk. I complained of caprice, I said of tenderness that I was sick and become feeble, become a coward from love, wretched and miserable from the need of separation; but now this is all that afflicts me, that I have not the former wretchedness; wretched and pitiable am I even now."

¹ *Kebisa sheshkma.*

² *Lmobiereba.*

³ *Burt'hi.*

⁴ *Sapalne*, 269.

⁵ *Acumi* (Arabic).

CHAPTER LIX

RAP'HED INFORMS HIS DAUGHTER OF RAMIN'S DESERTION

WHEN Rap'hed had come in from the chase to his daughter Gul, he made known Ramin's secret, and told her: "Ramin has become inimical, he has declared his fickleness and what lies in his heart, he has abandoned love for thee; if thou art faithful and servest him till eternity, he is still a horrible serpent; as it sets itself to bite so does he to ravage. A bitter tree bears bitter fruit, however much we water it with sugar. If brass¹ and lead² be burned a thousand times, they will not thus acquire the colour of gold; and if copper³ be molten a thousand times in the fire, this will not give it the colour of milk. Since Ramin did not keep Vis's heart and could not be | faithful to her, what prospect of 329 joy is there for thee? Since thou hadst heard his story, thou didst wrongly and strangely to wed him as thy spouse. A fickle man must not be trusted. Since his heart always satiates itself⁴ in his excessive pride and cruelty, he has the nature of a lion; to seek justice from him and to expect fruit in a saltmarsh is alike. Why didst thou wed a fickle man? Why didst thou trust a perjured man? Why didst thou expect sugar from gall? But since this was God's decree for thee, now useless discourse and regret are unprofitable for us."

Thereupon Ramin came in from the chase. Like a wounded beast, his sight was dim, and his road was closed. He was melancholy, his heart was filled with blood,⁵ and

¹ *Rvali.*

² *Tquia.*

³ *Spilendzi.*

⁴ Var., "Since Ramin's heart is always insatiable."

⁵ Var., "fire."

his face was bathed in tears. He looked like a corpse at the merrymaking.

His wife Gul sat before him, to whom all the beauty of her face was become hideous. Her form was straight as an arrow, and her face was in fulness like the moon, and roses bloomed on it. Whoever saw her gave her his heart, and at sight of her fire burned up his heart.

But her thusness was as useless to Ramin as musk to a corpse. Only his body was hers, but no longer his heart. He sighed from moment to moment, and tears rose in his eyes. His heart trembled; he had no power to talk, and all joy became distasteful to him because of his longing for 330 Vis. | He could look on nobody, and thought: "No one knows what is in my heart." He asked his heart with tears, and said:

"What is more pleasant than the union of lovers? This enjoyment and royal banquet are so bitter to me that I no longer seem to myself to live. Now, my wife¹ is thinking that I am sitting merry, and she does not know in what a state I am for lack of Vis, or how I burn, and how the thought of her has come back to me increased. Vis thinks that I have forgotten her. She thinks: 'Ramin is well without me. He has forgotten his love for me. He is merry without me. He has forgotten his oath to me, and I am forgotten.' How can she have regard for me while thinking thus, or what promises can I who have forgotten soul, life-giving love, and religion offer? Who can convince her of this my condition after such a short time. Or what answer can I give to God and to her, since I have given the heart that was her own to another?

"Stone me, O lovers, and take bloody vengeance on me! Drink my blood as I drink mine own, since I have proved myself a traitor to a trusting heart, and by my perjury I have caused every giver of a heart to fear. Now pity me, miserable, repentant, I adjure you by God, since she thinks that her Ramin is no longer what he was. She knows not

¹ Var., "Vis."

my present grief and the sighing of my heart for lack of her, that I am outside all joy, that my heart is become black as her eyes, | and when I am away from her I am 331 twisted like her perfumed hair.

“Would that I knew what the cypress¹-formed and sun-faced ravisher of my heart will do to me! . . . She will become to me a bloody enemy on account of her heavy grief. She will sacrifice me, she will dye the earth with my blood, she will completely bring me to nought. Through capacity for travail I am like the earth. In hardness I am like iron, yet am I exhausted by excessive distress. I seek means to save my life. I am not an ass that I should bear burdens of earth till my death. I will go away, I will search out the pearl from its shell. I will go away and seek hope for my life from my soul.

“Who knows what griefs I have endured through absence from my beloved? Who has seen such another grief in the world that sight avails as a medicine? Now my joy and melancholy are from her who is to me more desirable than soul and life. The sight of her will revive me, her converse will rejoice me, her embrace will immortalize me, and her caress will make me forget everything.

“Why do I hide my need from such a physician, and as long as I hide it so much the worse do I become in concealing this grief. I cannot quarrel with my heart any longer. I will make known its secret everywhere. I am drowning in the whirlpool² of separation. Thus the prayer of the heart of the afflicted one is fulfilled. I will go, I will beseech Vis. Surely she will be tender to me, and wipe the rust from her heart.

“But I fear that since I have become so ill without Vis I may die before I see her. But this | seems to me joy: 332 that in seeking her I shall be buried a corpse on the road, and every man will know my story and my sufferings for love. Whatever traveller or wanderer passes over my tomb will sit down a little, and I shall be pitied. When they learned my story they would beg forgiveness of God

¹ Saro.

² Moreva, R., 1124, 1281.

for me. They would say: 'He was a wayfarer, and died for love.' The wanderer pities the wanderer, and they will think of me, because they remember one another. Wayfarers are spurned of all, and nobody remembers them. Should mine enemy slay me, that death is shameful to me. But since I die of longing for my beloved, it is a great glory to me.

"Many wars and battles have I gone through, many times have great hosts fled from me, many heroes¹ have I hewn down with my sword, many elephants,² lions, and wild beasts have I slain. Foes cannot stand before me. The sun praises³ the edge⁴ of my spear,⁵ the earth kisses my rein,⁶ I have brought to nought even the planets as my foes. And desire of my beloved has brought to nought me, the conqueror of all these, so that the world is bitter to me. I have been delivered in safety from so many enemies, and I am bound like a prisoner by love for my beloved. Surely death will not overcome me to all eternity! Though I was not afraid of Vis's anger, still I have no resource save submission.

"I know not any other means to go hence save I go alone secretly, that neither soldiers, nor knights,⁷ nor guide⁸ may follow me, for it beseems me not to go away openly. Whoever hears of it will begin to reproach me.

333 | Then I shall not see Vis nor rejoice. And if, on the other hand, I go away alone, the road is fearful and long; the mountains are snow-bound; and the streams are ford⁹-less through rain; game is exterminated by the harshness of the winter; Marav itself is snowy; here the air rains camphor.¹⁰ I wish to set out on so long a road, and a more difficult thought than all these afflicts me: that she, the ravisher of my soul, may show me an angry Kadj¹¹-like face

¹ *Dchabuci.*

² *Pilo*, 407, 433.

³ *Akebs.*

⁴ *Taueri*, 221.

⁵ *Shubi*, 442. R., 3, 430-1.

⁶ *Sadave*, 277, 324. ⁷ *Qmani.*

⁸ *Qolaozi*, 275. R., 955, 1350.

⁹ *Phoni* or *p'hona* here means "ford." In R., 238, 573, 1006, 1214, "stream," "pool."

¹⁰ *Kap'huri*, 337.

¹¹ *Kadji.*

and not forgive me for my deeds. She may not show me her face bright as the sun, nor come out on the roof. She may not let me see her beautiful face, nor open the door to me, nor have pity on me. If she thus begin to reproach me, who have suffered so much for her, I shall stay outside the door; my piteous soul will be without hope, and my toil fruitless. The cold and ice of longing for her will kill me, unpitied by her, after having suffered for her.

“Alas for my youth and bravery!¹ alas for my exalted² and renowned name! alas for my horse and armour!³ alas for mine innumerable hosts, treasures, and trappings;⁴ alas that I am in such a state no longer master of my heart, that all these possessions should become useless to me, and no longer avail me!

“I fear not sword and armour,⁵ I am not amazed at the multitude and fury of hosts; but I am afraid of Vis's sun-like face and her heart hard as an anvil.⁶ What does this bravery¹ avail me with her, or why should I say to my heart: ‘O heart, how long wilt thou strive? how long will thy discontent and madness last? how long will thy tears flow like seas?’ Every heart is merry, | and mine, alas! is 334 always melancholy and oppressed—sometimes amid fire and sometimes amid ice; and such a smoke rises that I have neither rest by day nor sleep by night. Neither the army pleases me nor solitude, neither garden nor *moedan*, neither court nor banqueting halls,⁶ neither tourney⁷ nor chivalry,¹ neither abundance in drink nor discourse with comrades,⁸ nor a high-born spouse—not even life itself without Vis, and my balm is the sight of Vis.

“Instead of singing and praise, day and night I hear reproach from Koistan, Khuzistan, Kirman, Tabaristan, Gurgan, Khuarasan. My story is told everywhere, and the mention of me is in every land. In the cities they sing songs about us, in the fields the shepherds speak⁹ of us,

¹ *Dchabucoba.* ² *Maghali.* ³ *Abdjari*, 846. R., 430, etc.

⁴ *Sasaluko*, R., 1055, *Marr Texts*, IV., r.m.z.

⁵ *Gurdemli*, 144, 253, 442. R., 5. ⁶ *Samsmelo*.

⁷ *Tzkhent'ha t'hamashi.* ⁸ *Arip'hi*, 68. R., 1143. ⁹ *Ubnoben*.

women behind the doors, and men¹ among merchants, children in the market-places,² tell and sing our tale.

“ My face is become like an old man’s, yet my heart cannot be sated with love, since Vis, the ravisher of my heart, is far from me. I have become as yellow in the grief of suffering separation as a *drähcani*,³ and I am like one sick through excessive weakness, (so that) I can neither run four steps nor bend my bow. On the day when I put my horse to a gallop⁴ my loins seem to be broken. Can it be that my back of iron has become wax? Can my stone-like fist have 335 become like wool? | My horse, which was better than a wild ass,⁵ has become feeble in the stall⁶ like myself. I cannot make the coursing panthers⁷ hunt the goats, nor loose⁸ the falcons on the partridges, nor can I wrestle with the wrestlers⁹ and try my strength, nor can I make merry with carousers.

“ All my fellows boast of fortune and youth. Sometimes they mount their horses and sometimes (don) their armour; they rejoice beside their wives and mistresses. Sometimes in the field and sometimes at home, according as they wish, they sport. They study science, and some follow after merry-making and rejoicing. And I am become strange to all seemly and good habits,¹⁰ as if fortune and knowledge had both forsaken me, and both had fallen asleep. I am (dull) like well water, and in mind like a messenger, for day and night I travel without resting. I do not lay my head upon a pillow nor my body on a couch. Sometimes it has befallen me to be beside *devs* and sometimes to journey beside lions. I do not rejoice at what has overtaken my heart in this world, and in eternity can I expect joy on account of my perjury?¹¹

¹ *Mamani*, R., 776, and *Ecclesiastes* ii. 8. ² *P’holotzi*.

³ *Drähcani*, 87, 357—a coin worth 3s. Cf. last page of E. Thaqaishevili’s *Tri Khroniki*. R., 456, 992.

⁴ *Gavadcheno*.

⁵ *Candjari*, 67. R., 75.

⁶ *Akhori*, 847.

⁷ *Avaza*, 316, 388.

⁸ *Mouteob*.

⁹ *Morcinali*.

¹⁰ *Zne*.

¹¹ Var., “ What joy can I expect? ”

“Alas, O heart! how long wilt thou burn me with fire and boil me in the pot¹ of grief? I am slaying thee in the superabundance of my ignorance, and it is all one to thee. I am like gall in my stupidity, and thou art become devoid of all share in solace from joy. May God give no one a heart like thee, for thou art drunk with love and stupid with ignorance.”

| Ramin, after this manner, communed with his heart and 336 reproached it. But this was of no avail; the desire of his heart for information gained such strength that he could no longer master his heart, and in this suggestion of his heart, like a chicken’s heart, he trembled so miserably, and at his drinking sat so melancholy, as if his heart itself no longer gave him joy. He got down from the throne and went forth from the palace, he went away as swiftly as a coward from a battle. He mounted on his bay-steed,² the swift-running. When he went out from the gates of the city, like one winged he came towards Khuarasan, and travelled in those uninhabited and desert plains on the road to Khuarasan.

¹ *Codchobi.*

² *Rakhsî, 372, 436*—? chestnut.

RAMIN SEES ADINA

JOURNEYING by such roads seemed so pleasant to Ramin that even the breeze¹ coming against him was a joy. "O breeze,¹ coming from the east, that seemest to bring perfumes from Paradise! From Khirkhizi,² Samanduri,³ and the fields,⁴ thou bringest the scent of musk, aloes,⁵ and camphor.⁶ This has the charm to me of the breezes of former days, when the ravisher of my heart came from the country with the scent of amber and musk. Man has never plucked from the garden a rose such as Ramin has plucked in Vis." He was in this conceit: "Since he has given me a happy odour, surely God will not give me unhappiness at all, and I may even see Vis's face."

Thereupon there met him Vis's secretary, Adina. When he perceived him afar off and recognized him, his heart, with joy, opened like a door, he gave rein to his horse and rode furiously forward. Adina dismounted from his horse, he did homage, and kissed the earth before Ramin. There came forth from him the scent of Vis's fragrance. As much as he was desirous of news of Vis, so much did he rejoice to see him. He joyfully greeted him, and they gave thanks to God for the sight of each other. They tied up their horses and sat down on the verdure. He gave the message he had, Vis's greeting and wish. Then he 388 presented the letter, Vis's shirt and head-covering. | When Ramin saw Vis's token he trembled like one sick of anague,

¹ *Niavi*, 346.

² *Khirkhizi*.

³ *Saman*, 284.

⁴ *Qanurt'h*, ? *qana*—cornfield.

⁵ *Alva*, 284.

⁶ *Kap'huri*, 333, 345.

he fainted, lost consciousness, the letter fell from his hands.

Then, when he recovered his senses, he began to read the letter, and before he had finished he had moistened the letter, Vis's shirt and head-covering, with tears mingled with blood. They were stained with his blood, sometimes he pressed them to his mouth, sometimes to his breast. From moment to moment he swooned. As water flows from a cloud, so did blood flow from his eyes; as lightning comes from the clouds, so fire came from his heart, and smoke from his mouth. Sometimes he wept and sometimes he sighed; sometimes he shrieked like a madman and then fainted; sometimes he became speechless; sometimes he fell face downwards and tore his collars. The scent of Vis's shirt and headgear had destroyed his senses for desire of her, so that he had no longer consciousness, and it even seemed as if he would not survive his change of heart. When he had somewhat recovered, after his wont he waxed rhetorical. He spoke thus:

“Woe to my fate and wrath, for the seed of misfortune was sown and measured out to me by my fair beloved, for she is the mistress of all beauties. She, whose court is the sky, has removed me by her lightning. She has removed from mine eyes the beauty of her face, neither will she let me hearken to the charms of her voice; she has sent me her shirt instead of a sight of herself, and instead of her speech she has written me a letter. Repose of soul will come by this shirt, and the future of my happiness from this letter.”

RAMIN'S LETTER TO VIS

At the top of the letter he wrote the name of "Vis, the sun-like, more fair than the moon, full of roses, the column¹ of crystal, the adorner of the crown, the enlightener of the court, the water of immortality, the perfume of Paradise, the precious gem, herself sovereign and the light² of royalty, the sun of Eran and Khuarasan ;" and said : " May God not grant me even a moment of life without thee, and may He make it (life) to thee unending as thy desire. I fear to see thy sun-like face ; longing and reason are unattainable to me because I cannot forget this fear. I fear thy immortal-like discourse ; I am sinful. I am afraid thou mayst do to me that which I deserve, and mayst cause my foes to rejoice. If the fault for this deed was not mine, neither does thy blame befit me. Thou wast the first to invoke the devil of enmity. When thou didst drive me out thou weariedst me soon, and thou couldst not endure my presence. Thou didst incite me to plunge into sin.

"I had no suspicion of such a thing as this from thy heart and love. My mind was heaven, thou madest it 840 earth. Thou knowest | how I raised of thy love a palace to dwell in, but thou from the first didst begin to pull it down. As much as thou hast grieved me even so much am I deprived of the power of venturing (? to speak). Thou art the mistress. Do to me what thou wilt, take thy revenge. I had a heart, and I gave it to thee as thy property. I have not spared myself in hearkening to thy

¹ *Sueti.*² *Mnathobi*, 343.

commandment. From thee command, from me obedience. However far I have been from thee, my heart has remained before thee as a hostage. My hostage was in thy hands. I have never ventured to transgress thy command. Since I have been away from thee I swear by thy sun I have been like one imprisoned in the mouth of a dragon,¹ and my heart was full of grief for lack of thee. My sallow cheeks are witnesses of my state. If thou findest me worthy and interrogatest me, I think I shall convince thee. Of the grief I have suffered my cheeks will bear witness, and my tearful eyes will be compurgators.² My golden-tinted witnesses and my blood-stained compurgators, when thou beholdest these compurgators and witnesses, then thou wilt believe what I have said. I speak nought save truth, and I never remain dishonoured in obliquity.

"Thou hast abandoned me, and I have retaliated. Now praise me instead, and I will praise thee. Now, since I first have craved forgiveness for sin, having never abandoned thee, now I will begin from the beginning to cherish and serve thee. I will know none else; save thee I can cherish none. Without thee I will not desire love, nor the sight of mine eyes. I will wipe from my heart the rust of wrath against thee. I will buy with mine eye the dust from thy feet. I will not forsake love for thee, and it (my love) will be incapable of increase. | I will give thee heart 341 and mind undivided. Speak thou thus also to me; but even if thou dost not, I shall not seek separation from thy face. I will not break off my acquaintance with the sun. I cannot (do without) thy fragrant hair redolent of T'hibetan³ musk. I can find nothing better.

"Man asks of God Paradise for pleasure. Thou art to me both earth and Paradise. It will not afflict me if I see grief from thy love. No one finds joy without grief.⁴ Now, let us forget the past, and let us begin from the beginning to cherish love and joy. Be thou to me as yellowness to

¹ *Veshapi.*

² *Moph'itzari.*

³ *T'humbut'huri*, 284.

⁴ For the association of grief and joy, cf. *Visramiani*, 441. R., 621, 708, 945, 1509, 1555.

gold, and I will be to thee as light to the sun. Be thou to me as scent to the musk, and I will be to thee as colour to the rose. Joy without me befits thee not, and there is no comfort for me without thee. My sharp sword, which has to men the taste of gall, is not left to me, nor is the arrow of thine eyelashes, the slayer of my heart. When thine arrow and my sword are united together, our foe cannot remain alive. As long as thine absence is prolonged I am hopeless of life. I send as many wishes and greetings to thee as there are drops in the rivers and seas.

342 "Thy letter,¹ the restorer of my life, was presented to me on the road, and thence I have sent thee a brief answer. If I were bound with a thousand hobbles² I should not leave them unbroken. I follow in haste after this letter, like an arrow a stadium³ | in length. Surely God will be merciful to me, and I shall not die without seeing thee."

When Ramin had written the answer to the letter, he sent Adina quickly back, and he himself followed swiftly. He forgot the length and difficulty of the road to Khuarasan. Ramin and Adina were a day's journey distant from each other.

Though passion from beginning to end is harmful and wholly grievous to the body and irksome to the soul, nevertheless it has two joys: first, the time when a letter comes with news, and, secondly, the time of meeting. These joys befall none without pain. None can see so piteous an invalid as a lover, especially when his beloved is afar off. Day and night he sits broken by thought, and gazes along the road awaiting letter and tidings from his beloved.

The heart-bereft Vis was thus every day. She awaited news of Ramin and the coming of Adina. When she saw Adina afar off her face bloomed with joy, and she was as glad as if she had Ramin face to face. He reported in

¹ Var., *roartagi*—royal decree.

² *Toilo*, 327, 343.

³ *Utevani*, 276, 442—? 100 fathoms.

detail the news from Ramin: how mad he was for love of her, how he was faring to see her and longing for her, so that his present love could not be compared with his former love. And he had as a proof Ramin's letter. As Ramin had done to her letter, so did Vis to Ramin's letter. Sometimes she laid it on her mouth, sometimes on her breast. Until Ramin's coming she had the letter as a comforter, and Adina as a dissipator of grief.

The next day she went into the bath, adorned herself, | donned her garment of pearls, set the crown upon her head, 343 and shone more than the sun. The moon was darkened in heaven by her beauty, her hairs were Ethiop¹ hosts, and her lips balm for the sick of a thousand cities, and her face the increaser of soul to young men and the ravisher of lovers' reason. Her hair was like a musky rope.² As she herself was beautiful, so was she fairly adorned, desirable and to be wished for as Paradise by every human being. She, such a peerless luminary,³ was become captive to love, and her silvery form was become golden; desirable, beautiful, and a heart-ravisher was she. But ceaselessly she was burned by the fire of love, and her patience was spent in her haste to see her lover. Staying on the roof, her eye was on every side, and she jumped about like a seed⁴ (of corn) on a hot dish;⁵ she could not rest in one place. She was weary of solitude, and maddened by the absence of her lover. Her heart became the shelter of a host of woes. She forsook not Moabad's tower⁶ on the roof. Night was falling, and he whom she awaited came not. It was sleep-time,⁷ and she slept not; it was as if her couch under her had become made of thorns and burrs.⁸ At cock-crow she fell asleep for a little. The same moment she woke up and shrieked like one attacked by an enemy. The nurse took hold of her, and said:

¹ *Zangi*, 260, 387. R., 120, 1117, 1122. ² *Toilo*, 341.
³ *Mnat'hobi*, 339. R., 1515—planet. ⁴ *Martzuali*, 313, 324.

⁵ *Cetzi*, 349. Daniel ii. 41—“potter's clay.”

⁶ *Coshci*.

⁷ *Dzilis pir*, 151—mouth, or edge, of sleep. R., 472. Marr, I. 22, 23, note 1. Cecelidze, *Jerusal. Kanonar*, 340.

Birci, 271.

"Why does the devil of impatience thus overcome thee?"

Vis quivered like the sun in a clear stream. She said to the nurse :

"Who has seen or who has heard of love like unto my love? Nothing more wonderful than this night has ever 344 | befallen me. A thousand times my life has come to my lips, and I burn, as it were, in a stony river bed among thorns, so seems my couch to me. My melancholy fate, black as night, is like an Ethiop king seated on an elephant,¹ and Ramin is the enlightener of my fate. The blackness of my night will be dispersed when the moon of my luck shows his face. Now in a dream I have seen his face, the sun-like, the fragrant world, and by his sweet savour he perfumed the earth. He took me by the hand and spoke to me with his jacinth-coloured lips and his pleasant tongue. Thus he spoke : 'I am come to greet thee secretly, for I fear thy foes. I have not come openly because they hide thee from me, and guard thee, as they guard (their) soul from mischance.² Do somewhat for me who am so forgone for the sake of thee! Show me thy face in mercy, and be no longer wroth with me. Embrace me pleasantly after thy wont, amber me with thy hair, and make me immortal with the kisses of thy lips. Soften thy heart and look not surly on me—it beseems not thy beauty; tenderness to me becomes thee better.' I saw these pleasures in a dream, and I heard such words from him, and now in reality I am so far from him. I have not seen him for such a long time. Now why, O why, was I so impatient? Why, O why, was I so sad and oppressed? As long as my fate separates me from the ravisher of my heart I shall be so sad and impatient that I shall be forgiven by all."

¹ *Pilo*, 238, 382.

² Var., "as they guard a madman from accident."

RAMIN COMES TO MARAV

WHEN Ramin saw from afar the city of Marav, he rejoiced as is the wont of the afflicted in the expectation of meeting. He gave thanks to God and a flower (? of poesy) to the city. He began to praise¹ it, saying : "O pleasant Marav, seat of sovereigns, rejoicer of the sad, enricher of the poor, comforter of the oppressed; pleasant Marav, inexhaustible in flowers in winter and summer alike, without whom those who have once seen thee cannot live, and especially he who like me knows his heart-ravisher to be here. O pleasant Marav, chiefest of all cities, invincible by foes, desirable to the tried, abode of the sun, seat of the moon, and palace of her who has reft me of reason and life!" Ramin, for lack of Vis, and being out of himself, was in such a state that the princes of Khuarasan seemed roses of Eraq, and the stones of Marav like gems of Gorab. A strange land cannot please a man like his own, and he can give to none such a heart as he gave to his first love. He was so delighted to see his country that the snow there seemed like camphor,² the leaves like sweet-smelling oil, the trees like Paradise, and the earth like immortality. He entered Marav at the midnight hour; he was as merry as a resuscitated corpse. Ramin straightway went to the foot of the tower where Vis was. | A sentinel³ had been set by Vis to watch for Ramin's 346 coming. When the sentinel saw and recognized him, he at once went down and told the nurse. She rejoiced greatly, and said to Vis :

"The dissipator of thy griefs is come, thine ever-

¹ *Keba*, 327. ² *Kap'huri*, 337, 354. ³ *Gushagi*, 121. R., 1367.

remembered fair monarch is come, the embellisher of the throne, the glorifier of armour.¹ He begs a breeze² of welcome from thee; thy spring is come, the branch of thy joy has brought forth fruit, the pearl-shell of thy hope has made thee to find the pearl of good fortune. See (how) the night is lightened; see, thy griefs have not been in vain! Now give back joy to thy heart; now, through thee the earth has bloomed with joy, the wind wafts from the mountains the scent of amber. Look with thine own eyes at thy joy and desire. Good weather³ has come for thee. Hitherto the night was dark as thy hair, and now it is bright as thy face. The sky has put off the thick mist,⁴ and now wipe thou the rust from thy heart. O moon, the mountains and plains rejoice like thee at his coming; thy Ramin has come under a fortunate planet.⁵ The sun and moon await the meeting; his lovely form stands at the door and entreats thy command, he begs thee to disavow thine anger. Thou art displeased with him, and he is heart-broken for thee. Open the door of thy heart to the gladdener of thy heart, be hopeful one of the other, and forget your former woes."

Vis, made joyful, released from all woes, said :

347 "Shahinshah sleeps below,⁶ I fear a mischance; | if he should awake suddenly and find out, I shall see Ramin no more, and life will be vanity to me, unless I can look forward to his staying; otherwise, let whatever thou wilt befall if I but see Ramin once. Now, I adjure thee in God's name, bind him in sleep to the best of thy power, that he may not awake and discover what we are about."

The nurse hastily muttered some spell, so that even if the world had fallen into ruins he could not have perceived it as long as they did not wish him to do so. Then Vis

¹ *Abdjari*, 333, 354. R., 426, etc.

² *Niavi*, 337.

³ *Dari*=good weather, 354.

⁴ *Al-muli—almuri*, 351 (*ali*—flame; *muri*—smoke)—“whirlwind,” Job xxxviii. 1; Acts ii. 19, “vapour of smoke.”

⁵ *Elli*.

⁶ *Kue*, 145, 175—? “is lying down sleeping.”

came, as if she were in the sulks, and sat down by the window.¹

Ramin saw her, his face bloomed with joy, his heart began to open like a door; but he restrained himself and was patient, he calmed his heart from its trembling. Ramin stood beneath and said nothing to her. He said to his horse:

“O steed,² firm as a mountain and strong as an elephant! I have loved and treated thee as a son, I have made for thee a golden manger,³ I have led thee with a silken⁴ halter,⁵ I have cockered thee. Why hast thou gone from me, why hast thou forsaken me, and left thy manger, and no longer thinkest of my stable?⁶ Go to another manger and find a stable, but good will not befall thee. Wert thou not better in thy former state? Thou thyself knowest how many ills I have seen.”

When Ramin from afar saw Vis, the sun among the planets, he felt somewhat of measureless joy. But when he saw that she was displeased, he was much grieved, and began to beseech her with a thousand entreaties, saying:

“O sun, reviver of my heart and mind, O full moon, O daystar of the dawn, O candle of hosts, | O desired of 348 monarchs, O enlightener and beauty of the fair, O rosebud,⁷ O fragrant lily! Why dost thou hasten to shed the slave’s blood? why dost thou hasten my death? why hide thy face from me? why desire me to roam the fields? why not turn thy face towards me? I am thine own Ramin, and thou art my Vis, dear as my life; I am the least of thy servants, Ramin, and thou art my mistress, Vis. I am Ramin, the king of lovers, become a fable in the lands for my love and devotion to thee; thou art Vis, the sun of suns by the peerlessness of thy face and the beauty of thine eyes and hair, who hast brought me hither by thine entreaty. I am the

¹ *Sarcmeli*, 855.

² *Sakhedari*—any animal for riding. *Acts xxiii. 24*, “beast.”

³ *Baga*, *Luke ii. 7, 12*.

⁴ *Abreshumi* (Persian).

⁵ *Avshara* (Persian).

⁶ *Akhori* (Turkish), 835, 856.

⁷ *Cocobi, cocona*.

same whom thou sawest, and art thou no longer she? Can it be that thou art grieved at the joy of my foes? If thou wouldst grieve at my death, be not angry with me; be calm, be reconciled to me, do not embitter pleasant joy, be not an oath-breaker and perjurer, let not thee and my heart be united to slay me, burn me not with the fire of mercilessness. Alas for all my hopefulness! for I have sacrificed myself for love of thee. I have sowed love in the garden of youth, I have caused my life to fade, I have watered mine eyes with tears, I could not sleep one night and I could not rest one day, and I have become exhausted in following after it (love). When spring came, in it bloomed the violet, the rose, the lily, and the narcissus. Many kinds of fruit came forth on the trees. The garden was fair as the good fortune of the happy, in it birds began to chirrup, they bathed in the brook, I built a strong wall (round the garden). Now the winter of abandonment is come, the wind of inconstancy, and the cloud of drought, the season 349 of misfortune; | that garden is laid waste. No longer is there that fruit, no longer those roses, no longer rivulet, nor meadow, nor wall! Foes and enviers have uprooted, riven, cut the trees, they have broken down the wall, and frightened away the birds. Woe to such a time! for our love is like a clay¹ vessel, not a golden one, for when it breaks it becomes worthless. When heart was taken away from heart, and friend from friend, love disappeared, and grief was added to grief. Now our foes rejoice. Would that God might make our foe like unto me! Now our slanderers are freed from troubles, they have no longer wherewithal to slander us. We no longer need an intermediary, no longer a keeper of secrets; neither does the nurse see trouble, nor thou; neither does my heart hurt me, nor is Moabad displeased. No one is to blame but me; for this reason the fate of none is like my fate, for this I complain that I am always a coward. But for this I had not been thus unhappy, my heart could not have enslaved me thus and betrayed me. Whoever hearkens to the devil² will be

¹ *Cetzi*, 343.

² *Eshma*—a demon.

ever blind and sad like me. Instead of a fresh¹ poplar² a willow³ tree has sprung up, and instead of musk⁴ sand; instead of a precious gem I have been content, thanks to the turning of the planets and heaven,⁵ with a piece of broken potsherd.⁶ Now I entreat forgiveness; soften thy heart towards me. I have done ill and have sinned; do thou well and forgive me. I have sinned and repented. As long as I live thou art the master and monarch, thou canst pay me back; thou art my oppressor from the beginning, and at the end do not make me pay for all. If thou forgivest me not, I will become a porter at the door, and I will endure service until I slay myself. I have 350 sinned against thee once. I am not the only one who has erred on the earth. Now in return for this I ask a thousand pardons, I will entreat and demand thee for it until wrath disappears from thy heart. As long as I live I shall consider myself to have sinned, and shall blame myself. I will not rest from saying, 'I have sinned, and I repent my deed.' While I am alive pardon the sinner. Thou hast sovereignty over the repentant, and thou art mistress. In what way thou wishest pay me out; but where are mercy, mastery, and forgiveness (found together)? . . . When I shall think upon my sin I shall be hopeless of pardon, and my heart will be poured out. If thou wilt not listen to my entreaty and demand, I shall die here at thy door; I shall weep piteously until my spirits fail. I can go nowhere else. Since thou art merciless to me, whom else can I seek? Do not so to me, O moon; add not grief to grief. The aged in their age and philosophers in their wisdom are not infallible, the swift steed stumbles, the keen blade is blunted, and I, too, have once had a mischance. Now I entreat pardon, put not on me the fetters of separation. I am thy slave, thou canst repay me with every punishment. I will be patient under all pains, except that I cannot bear thee to become weary of me. Neither can I bear thee to look at

¹ *Nedli*—moist, verdant.

² *Alva*.

³ *Tirip'hi*, 23, 92, 311.

⁴ *Mushci*, 284, 363.

⁵ *P'hilaka*—? *p'hilakni*, 441.

⁶ *Cetzi*.

me so. I prefer blindness to not seeing thee, and I prefer deafness to hearing reproaches from thee. May God not keep me a moment without thee, and may He not give thee patience lacking me. Since thou art so angry, life is wearisome to me. Thou art always sad because of unjust deeds, stone and iron wholly embrace in the chafing-dish.¹

351 | Now the heaviness of thy heart has added fieriness to my heart, so that if the sea were poured upon the fire of my heart even it could not extinguish it. The mist² of this land is from the smoke of my fire; the air knows what is hidden in my heart, and weeps because it is ill-fated. The night snows thus because, by a miracle, one half of my body from love is like fire and the other half like ice. How can a man be thus? Neither angel³ nor demon⁴ is seen so incomprehensible. Who, save me, has seen ice unthawed by fire, or fire unextinguished by water? For one who had such love in the soul, to die in snow were a shame. I thought this of thee: that thou wouldest save me from the fire, but I thought not at all that thou wouldest slay me in the snow. Say not that excessive entreaty is cowardly. I am thy guest. Every man should honour a guest, not thus drive him into the fields. And if thou desirest my death—and it is easy to thee—slay me not so pitilessly. To kill a guest from snow is a foul deed."

¹ *Satzetzhle*—? crucible, melting-pot 271.

³ *Angelozi*, 15, 18, 44, 232.

² *Al muri*, 346.

⁴ *Eshma*, 253, 274.

VIS'S ANSWER

Vis, like an enraged lion, thus wrathfully replied :

“Get thee gone, O Ramin ! Let thy hope of me be cut off. Comfort thy heart as if thou knewest me not, and hadst never seen the city of Marav ; as if we two were sundered—so understand the matter. That which has befallen thee from me pains me. Now entreat me no more. Once thou hast seduced, slain, and insulted me. Now thou desirest the same again, but it shall not be. Take away thy smoke ! Since thou hast taken away the fire, take away the smoke also. Since thou hast forgotten thine oath and broken thy vow to me, thou wilt not be able to deceive me any more. Go, speak to thy Gul, (go and) cheat her, and become mad for love of her. If thou art prudent, wise, and well-spoken, I am not tongueless and stupid. Thou knowest well that kind of deceit and cunning.¹ I know thee, and many a time have I heard from thee this kind of glibness.² Moreover, I am wearied of hearing thine oaths. No more will I be false to King Moabad, no more can I forsake him who has not forsaken me, no more will I do this thing that I did and sinned. Mine is he who has loved me through such ill behaviour, whose grace and love have not failed me for a moment, and who has preferred none other before me. He always 353 loves me true-heartedly ; he is not perjured like thee, nor like thee does he speak to me and dictate. Now he sits whole-hearted drinking ; he to whom may joy never be

¹ *Khlat'hva* (*khlat'hi*, Arabic)—also sew with swift thread.

² *Tzkap'hva*, R., 637, 1143.

lacking, and may he never feel jealousy of me on thine account ! Now I fear that Shahinshah may come into the bedchamber, and if he find not the rose in his garden, he may seek me on the couch ; and if he find me not, I shall again make him somewhat wroth. May his dwelling-place be ever as it is. And as for thee, however it may be, all is easy ! I want no more excuses for the shortcomings of this frozen love. My hereto grief is sufficient, for on thine account I have angered Shahinshah, and because of thee I have even forgotten God.

“ A thousand times hope of life has been cut off from me, and in the end—in return for all this woe—nothing remains to me from thee but perjury and troth-breaking, hopelessness, and shame. My lord has been displeased with me, and God, the Creator of heaven and earth, has surely not been gracious to me ! I, fool that I am, have in vain spoiled my youth for the sake of my passion, love, and constancy to thee, and joyless I have gnawed my hands at thy wrath . . . and nothing save wind remained in my hands. However much I might speak to thee, I should not exhaust what I have to say. From this tree fruit will not fall to thee, nor joy from this road. Turn back, go hence. In coming hither thou hast troubled thyself in vain ! Midnight is past, a fierce wind blows, and there are two palms¹ of snow (on the ground). Knock not in vain at this door ; it is cold iron. Pity thyself and go away, lest thou die | through tarrying in this snow. God give thee sweet slumber, and day and night may Gul be happy with thee, (she) the rose-named, the rose-cheeked.”

354 So she told not what was in her heart.

Ramin stood all night in the snow, and the air (sky) poured upon his head, the clouds snowed camphor² on his horse, the sky poured forth tears, and the wind moaned over Ramin. By dawn he was in such a state that from head to foot all his garments were frozen, and he himself was become like iron.

Vis, inside, weeping and with dyed breast, said :

¹ *Mtcaveli*, 69—? seven inches.

² *Kap'huri*, 345.

“ There is such snow and frost that even I indoors die of it! O cloud, shame on thee for weeping on Ramin’s head! Thou hast made his rose-colour saffron,¹ and his finger-nails blue.² But thou pitiest us both, and therefore weepest. Since it hurts him, snow not, O cloud ; rest a little ; add not to my grief! O wind, how long wilt thou blow? Be calm a little. Art thou not that wind which, with his fragrance, perfumed the whole earth? Now, why dost thou not pity his body in such cold—him from whose form the narcissi³ and lilies⁴ beg for perfume? O rich sea, however rich thou art, still art thou Ramin’s slave. Though thou hast many pearls, thou art not generous like Ramin. Now find fine weather⁵ for that lord⁶ of cavaliers⁷ by means of that cloud by which thou didst send rain. Thine armour⁸ is rain and snow, and his arms⁸ are trenchant. | If thou wilt not deliver him this night, he will dry thee 355 with the dust of his hosts. Hey! hey! How thoughtless and shameless am I, that I am seated comfortably in the palace, and have left his tender⁹ form in the snow and blast!¹⁰ Ramin’s face and form are now a yellowish-white rose, and scab¹¹ of the rose-tree is always cold.”

Then her heart could bear it no longer, and she went to the window.¹² From her beams the earth was wholly illuminated.

¹ *Zap’hrani*, 280. R., 346, etc.

² *Lila*—indigo, R., 385.

³ *Nargisi*, 313. R., 151, 397.

⁴ *Sosani*, 197, 234. R., 72.

⁵ *Dari*, 346.

⁶ *Patroni*, 236, 242.

⁷ *Tzkhenosani*, 313.

⁸ *Abdjari*, 346.

⁹ *Nazuki*, 233, 294, 357.

¹⁰ *Buki*, 286.

¹¹ *Muni*—itch, mange.

¹² *Sarcumeli*, 347.

VIS'S FURTHER DISCOURSE

Vis said to the chestnut¹ steed: "Thou art dear to me as a son. It is not for thee that I want this snow and rain, but thou art in bad company, and therefore all ill befalls thee. If thou hadst not chanced upon such an one as comrade, I would have found for thee a place under mine eyes. I am sorry that it is so with thee. What didst thou seek in this journey, and why didst thou happen upon an evil comrade? Didst thou not know that one should sojourn and travel with the good? Now thou hast endured grief in vain. Thou art not allowed to lie down, nor hast thou been tied up, nor has thy mouth been freed. Go, seek a stable² and fodder there with the one for whose sake thou hast abandoned me!"

She also said to Ramin:

357 "Go, Ramin, get thee hence! Many a time have I stood at thy door, and even thus didst thou not let me in. Many a time have I adjured thee, and thou hast not hearkened. Many a time weeping tears of blood have I cried aloud my tortures, and thou hast not pitied me, | and didst not see my man nor read my letter. I remember the many times when thou wert reposing pleasantly and sleeping well, inattentive to my affairs, whilst I was without heart, disturbed, and oppressed by a flood of tears. Now, for what thou hast done to me this is the return. Thou hast received from God evil for evil. However soft³ and delicate⁴ thou art, thou art not more so than I am. Since I was once thine, how canst thou now justify thy deser-

¹ *Rakhsî*.

² *Akhori*, 347.

³ *Chvili*.

⁴ *Nazuki*, 355.

tion? Now cut off all hope of me, as I am cut off from thy heart. I have sat afflicted by this. I was (like) one who floated about in the sea preserving hope. Now I am saved from the waves of the sea, my heart is cleansed from useless attachment to hope. Now, since thou hast no luck with thine old love, go and keep thy new love. An old *drahcani*¹ and gem² are good, but a new one is more precious! When thou hast cut off the head of my affection by desertion, then who can put the cut-off head anew on the neck? When the grass grows upon my tomb,³ even it will be oppressed and wearied by thee: first from the pains of love, and then by the wrath of desertion, and on every blade will be written a hundred thousand 'Hey, heys!' However well-advised I was, I did not know that affection of the heart grows old. Now seek no longer love from me. The aged never grow young again.

"Dost thou not remember when thou wrotest me a letter, and didst write a thousand insults and abuses, thou didst also send a message of reproach, and not one insult was left unspoken by thee? I have had no madness save my love for thee. | If love was declared to me, I did not 358 give it back to anyone equal to my love for thee. My heart has known none save thee, and has found its desire in none but thee. I have preferred none before thee. In nought have I deceived thee, and I have sought no other lover save thee, and by Fate thus has it befallen thee. Thou art like that unhappy mother who had but one daughter, and she was blind. My heart is bent like a bow, my words are straight as an arrow. Since thy heart is the target,⁴ thou canst not endure reproach. Take away thy target, that the arrow may not strike it. Go, that thou mayst not hear words which cause the heart to faint, gall in bitterness, and trenchant as a sword."

¹ *Drahcani*—coin, 67, 108, 334, 442.

³ *Samare*.

² *Thvali*—? eye.

⁴ *Sagani*.

RAMIN'S REPLY

RAMIN, the melancholy, made the following reply :

“ Raise not thyself to heaven with such discourse, O moon ! Thou canst not make an end of such words, thou canst not dig up the clay¹ with the spade² of patience. Thy tongue and heart do not witness together ; thy heart is annoyed by that which thou sayest. There is no thief like love, for it despoils the heart of patience and the cheeks of colour, as easily as stupor robs a drunk man of his gold. Though I may be old, my love has not aged ; a new tune may be struck from an old string.³ To me thy love seems the joy of all the world—why speak of old age ? Do not scold and blame me so much ; a healthy person never desires sickness. Now, though thou art healthy, I am sick by Fate, and I have not asked for this plague. Hast thou felt that I love thee and art thou grown proud ? Though thou art the chief of beauties, thou thyself knowest that this conduct towards me does not befit thee. Where would you find fame for mercy unless slaves should sin ? According to thy wealth so shouldst thou think of the poor. However greatly | I have sinned against thee, yet such a base punishment is not due to me. Adam⁴ in Paradise sinned against God, and I am of his race. If I have sinned, I crave forgiveness. God’s decree has been written on man’s head⁵ ; it is his nature to sin. Neither prudence turns God’s decree, nor can heroism,⁶ nor reason, nor madness overcome⁷ mischance. Man does not choose misfortune for himself.

¹ *T'hikhha.*

² *Bari.*

³ *Dzali*—of a musical instrument ; *ordzali*, 121.

⁴ Adam, 7.

⁵ Cf. 35.

⁶ *Dchabucoba.*

⁷ *Moerevis.*

"Scold me no more, reproach me no more. If I have become indifferent to thy love and have sinned, surely thou knowest that I did not willingly enter into sin against thee. If I have done aught against thee, there is no medicine save forgiveness. What thou hast done is enough for me.

"How long shall I stand in the snow and rain, and thou wrangle with me from moment to moment? Thou art merciless, tearless, and godless; thou cuttest me with thy tongue as with a sharp sword, and sayest to me: 'I have never seen thee, and I know thee not¹; and if I have seen thee I have not gone away hopeless, and I am mad with love for thee.' Seek not separation from me, and go not about to slay me. The sin of yesterday has passed with yesterday, henceforth see how I will cherish thee, and how I will serve thee to-morrow. If I have broken that vow, I now crave forgiveness. If it is well and fitting to entreat pardon, it is a greater glory for masters² to forgive. Know in truth that a good deed will not pass.³ I have broken my promise foully—it is enough. I stand in the snow and blast, and thou closest thine eyes of humanity. Whatever thou desirest in thy merciless heart, thou hast power over all; do anything, I save drive me away. But I cannot eat this 361 gall with my heart, and I cannot bear this burden with my soul. If my heart were even stone, it could not endure separation from thee. I fear absence from thee, and no other grief. May God not demand thy blood for this."

¹ ? inverted commas should end here.

² As there is no gender in Georgian, read "mistresses" (*patronthagan*).

³ *Cargisa kna ar tzakhkdebis.* R., 417, *cargi sakme . . . ar tzarkhdebis.* Cf. 450.

VIS'S ANSWER

“ O RAMIN, thou art made captive by Fate through stupidity. A former desertion in the end so pierces the heart that it will be seen on a man for ever. Thine anger has been to me like a brand on the heart, and so deeply does the iron burn that love for thee is obliterated, so that not even a trace is left. In one man thou canst not comprise irreligion and deceit,¹ nor in one heart enmity and friendship. Though my poor heart had been a mountain of iron, it would have been melted in thinking on the injustice of thy desertion.

“ When I think upon the thousand ways in which thou hast oppressed me, how can I love thee? Thou thyself knowest how many vows I have made to thee, how much good I have done and how much grief I have endured in awaiting hope from thee—and thou hast done that to me
 363 which befits a denier of God; | and I myself know what return thou hast made me. What thou sowest that shalt thou reap. Thou hast preferred another to me, so seek thine own. Thou art for her, and she is for thee; seek each other. Thou hast gone, and, like an eagle,² hast eaten carrion; and when thou wert sated, hast thou come hither? . . . Fickle one! Thou hast sold thy horse, and instead hast bought an ass—well hast thou marketed!

“ How could one like me suit thee? Thy dwelling-place is a stony, grassless³ saltmarsh.⁴ Why dost thou seek a habitation in a verdant garden? I thought thee a lion,⁵ a

¹ ? misprint for “ godliness.”

² *Orbi*, R., 959.

³ *Umdelo*.

⁴ *Mlashe*.

⁵ *Lomi*, 379.

hunter of deer;¹ but it is plain thou art an old fox² scarcely fit, with a thousand tricks, to catch a hare.³ Since thou hadst washed thy form clean, why didst thou pour ashes on thy head? Why didst thou set down the wine goblet and lift up vinegar in thy hands? Why didst thou lay down the musk⁴-pot⁵ and take up the garlic⁶-bowl?⁷ Why didst thou rise from the royal couch and sit down on sackcloth?⁸ Was it not enough sin that thou didst go away, forsake me, wed a wife, and abandon her who thought of thee; that thou didst reveal my shame to all, and make mine enemies to rejoice? Was it not enough that thou didst write me an insulting and abusive letter, and by thy letter cause my blood to flow? Dost thou not remember when I sent the nurse to thee and thou didst add ill to ill; thou didst insult and abuse her, and didst complain of a thousand sorceries, evil deeds, doggishness, witchcraft?⁹ 'Thou art the wizard⁹ and filthy one—not the nurse!' What thou saidst of her I have now found all in thee.

"In the beginning, alas! thou didst deceive her and me, too, for thou knowest how to do everything cunningly. Inconstant one! Thou wert perjured towards me. Thou didst go away to Gorab. As long as it pleased thee thou wert there and madest merry, now thou art come with tearful eyes and discoursest to us. Thy words are decked | with 364 gold without and iron¹⁰ within, and I am that garden blooming with a thousand colours to whom thou shouldst not dare to speak even one such word. I am that rose on which all monarchs cast themselves in desire. How did I become so shameful in thine eyes that I should be more hideous to thee than a *dev*? I am a pure spring, of which, when thou hadst drunk, thou didst fill it up with dirt; now thou art thirsty again, and are come hither in haste. If thou wert to desire it (afterwards), thou shouldst not have filled it up with earth."

¹ *Iremi*, 806.

² *Meli*, 879. R., 743, 1184.

³ *Curdgheli*, also rabbit.

⁴ *Mushci*, 849.

⁵ *Ukhhduri*—? milky : probably alabaster bottle.

⁶ *Niori* (*allium sativum*).

⁷ *Djami*—bowl, 393.

⁸ *P'hlasi*, 59. *Marr* IV., *rég.* R., 1183.

⁹ *Djadegoba*, *djadegi* (Saba Orbeliani's Lexicon).

¹⁰ *Rcini*.

RAMIN said :

“ O flower of the Chinese,¹ of the Barbarians!² It is said that the world turns like a millstone. It is thus decreed by God that sometimes it is hot and sometimes cold, and we are the children of the world. Also a man is sometimes whole and sometimes sick, sometimes happy, sometimes miserable, and sometimes poor. A man’s luck is frail, for a little flesh and a little bone cannot endure. In summer he desires cold, in winter heat. Though he lives by eating, yet eating also causes him to fall sick. Whatever desirable thing he desires, after a time he no longer desires it as at first. When he has attained his desire, gloom is gone ; and when he has got his wish, listlessness³ flees ! There is nothing longed for which is worse than love : to love a sun-like one | and be loved in return. A man loves so that he cannot bear it for a moment. The heart is a coward under the hand of desire, deprived of pleasant rest and sleep, and it meets with great grief in the quest ; and when it achieves doing and gratification, in that very moment it is sated and weary ; they cannot endure being together, they become pampered,⁴ and separation grieves them not.

“ I, too, am a man, and time will not suffer me to be on one affair. Like a bird, in memory I constantly flew to thee, because the curb⁵ of thy love was in my mouth.⁶ Then all thy character was pleasing to me, as thou thyself art pleasing. Then, when thou becamest angry with me, didst begin to sulk and open the new gate of enmity, I went away,

¹ *Chineli*, 151, 285, 316. R., 834.

² *Barbareli*, 451.

³ *Sizante*.

⁴ *Nazoben*.

⁵ *Lagami*.

⁶ Mixed metaphor.

that I might no longer look upon thy wrath and pettishness.¹ I took away the partridge² of love for fear of thy pet³ hawk;⁴ that heart which had been cherished by thee could not endure to be despised by thee. I thought, surely in the past I was able to do without Vis. I sought a fair one to whom to give my heart, therefore I gave my heart to her so as to deliver myself from thy care. They said to me: 'Nothing can burn out love save another love, as nothing can break iron save iron. When a new passion enters the heart of a man, he soon forgets the old; when a new coinage⁵ comes, the old coinage of the merchant becomes depreciated in the city.'

"When my friends counselled me, I went away to Gorab with them. Thou thyself knowest that the sight of thee is the light of mine eyes; as one thirsting for water, even so I sought a trace of thy face. Sometimes I would try to be delivered from thy care. | On the road I found a rose 367 called Rose; methought, she is a shining moon and sweet and rosy-cheeked as her synonym. I said: 'I will give my heart to this sun. I will be delivered from grief for Vis.'

"I cleansed my heart with blood. Openly and secretly I counselled my pitiful heart; but—entreaties are of no avail with it. I sought by means of anger to escape from thy sulkiness and pettishness—even then I was not weary of thy company. Since there were then so many affairs upon me, I had no other means, and now fire has burned my heart, as thou thyself knowest. Then by thy desire I went away, I wedded a wife such as thou hast heard, and also I greatly pitied Shahinshah. Day and night I wept; whether I was hunting or sat drinking, no one saw my tears dry. I have forsaken, for love of thee, my wife and that great glory. I could no longer endure to be away from thee. There was such a conflict of mind in my body that when my body was happy, my heart wept in grief for separation from thee, and was exhausted in absence from thee. I have not spent a moment pleasantly away from

¹ *Nazoba.*

² *Cacabi*, 205

³ *Nazi.*

⁴ *Kori.*

⁵ *Sika.*

thee, whether sleeping or waking. Now thou art my resource—evil and good, plague and medicine, sweetness and bitterness, cold and heat; thou art my desire and mischance, grief and joy, gloom and gladness, poverty and 368 wealth; thou art the cause of my life, thou art eye and heart, soul and Fate, my sun and moon, heaven and earth; thou art my foe and friend; surely thou art Fate, and therefore all comes to me from thee. Do to me what thou wilt: thou art sovereign over me! . . . I complain to thee of thyself with a burning heart, and I entreat thee to be mistress of my heart. Thus, since I have come at thy call, be no longer merciless to me."

THE tearful Vis, still seated, replied thus, while the roofs were enlightened by her face. Ramin's situation and grief pained her heart, but did not thus soften her stone-like heart. What is written on a stone is easily wiped off, but her former jealousy still remained. When her heart became warm, her jealousy poured water on the fire. She thus addressed Ramin :

“ O deceiver, trusting in thy fair-spokenness ! Thou hast thrown down the ball into the *maidan* of eloquence. . . . The wind is not captured by wishing, nor the sun's ray injured by mud. That thou shouldst go away from my love to Gorab, like a thirsty man seeking water, no longer having power to forget the woe of absence from me | except by 370 wedding another as wife ; that thou didst marry so as to forget thy woe, and that away from me thou couldst never have repose and pleasure—behold, all this thou sayest truly, I believe it. . . .

“ But why shouldst thou write me such an insulting and painful letter ? Why hast thou heaped upon me so many abuses and shames ? Why didst thou belie to me so shamefully my poor nurse ? By whose orders didst thou expose her before her foes, dishonourably, like a dog ? Now I will give thee one piece of advice, listen with attention : If thou wouldst quarrel with anyone, leave in thy heart a means of reconciliation ; a prudent man in war leaves room for conciliation. How could the devil come nigh thee to pull up from thy heart by the root the tree of love ?

“ Hast thou not heard how two devils of enmity always follow a man continually ? One says : ‘ Do such and such a thing, and it shall profit thee ? ’ And when he does it, the

other says: 'Why didst thou do it? Thou art destroyed.' The first devil made thee do what the second makes thee repent. It is easier not to do evil. Thy forgiveness and asking of oaths are like this. It is better to eat wholesome than unwholesome (food), and easier than drinking medicine afterwards. If thou hadst known this then, now my tongue would be shorter; and if I had been prudent at first, why 371 wert thou mine? | As thou didst forsake me and repentedst, even so I now repent, and I am guilty towards myself. Why did I even see thee? and if I saw thee, why did I love thee as a lover, why did I hearken to thee? Now thou art water and I am fire, and fire and water cannot be together."

RAMIN thus gently said to Vis:

“Thy wrath this night has hastened my death! . . . There are two nights for me: one the darkness of the air, and one thy wrath. What great grief the heart of man endures! If it were not so, how could I, poor creature, remain alive seeing thee look upon me thus? Through the painfulness of this night my spirits have come to my mouth. How has my poor bay steed¹ sinned against thee? Though I am indeed blameworthy, and thou grudgeth a resting-place and a couch to me, at least do not grudge it a little straw² and barley,³ as if thou didst not know me at all, and I were but a guest. Every man should be hospitable to guests and perforce invite them indoors. Rejoice my soul with love for this horse. Even if I die in the snow, it seems to me a glory to die because of thee, and I desire neither death nor life without thee! Death here is better for me, and I prefer it to bearing the care of this world and hearing thine anger. Lo! treat me as if thou hadst never | heard 373 my name, as if I had never asked forgiveness for anything; do not prolong my affair, do not beat about the bush.⁴ Now every man calls thee brave; but if thou sayest to me: ‘Get hence, hopeless one!’ whoever hears will accuse thee of meanness, not of anger.

“Between us there is neither blood nor inveterate enmity,—this is pettishness, and not any kind of enmity of the heart. It is not fitting to sport with death. Now, why dost thou sport with the life of thy slave? I am not one to

¹ *Rakhs*, 836, 436.

² *Bze.*

³ *Kr̥phili.*

⁴ *Nu mizeszob*, 424—do not quibble.

be driven away by cold, nor will it make me leave this neighbourhood. As long as I live I shall stand here before thee; it matters not to me if I die in the snow; it is no shame for me to die for thee. I have tried being without thee, and I wished the living to be a corpse; and if I lived without thee, what joy would there be for me? Oh, awful blast¹ of winter, add fierce frost and snow that I may die the quicker! For me, death in the snow is much more pleasant than the baseness of Fate and the sight of a lover become hostile. A body of stone and a soul of iron could not bear this state in which I am! . . . ”

¹ *Buki*, 286, 355.

Vis said :

“ Oh, Ramin, forsaker, at last by thy wit thou hast fallen into ill-luck. Thus is the custom with evil-doers and sinners, if they at any time fall into such trouble as thou now hast fallen into. Surely the bird that has flown by is not caught in the net!¹ Thou art now houseless in this city of Marav, and a stranger among thy many friends. Never shalt thou have thy will of me nor find shelter in Marav. It is better that thou stand not there in vain, nor speak uselessly, nor seek roses and lilies on the rocky bank² of a river. When thy former lover slipped out of thy hands, it was better for thee to have sat pleasantly by the side of the latter one. Gul is thy wife, and when thou hadst a joy-giver like her sitting at home with thee, why didst thou go elsewhere broken-hearted ?

| “ This palace is of the Shahinshah Moabad and fortunate 375 for his guest, but not for such an insulter as thou art. May God give thee no inviter,³ for thou hast neither shame before thy host nor fear of God ! And since thou art not worthy to sit there and speak to me, how can I let thee come face to face, or how can I lead thee into the palace of Moabad ? I tell thee to go hence, and thou sayest : ‘ I am a guest ! ’ . . . Thou art like that countryman who was turned out, for they would not let him stay in the village, and he said : ‘ The village belongs to me.’ When thou camest forth from thy house, didst thou not then know that there was winter snow and rain, and that there would be a blast ? Why did this road seem to thee a sport, since thou knewest that in Marav thou hast no house, and that

¹ *Makhe.*

² *Riqe*—? *rice.*

³ *Mehman*, cf. *maeman*, 437.

Vis was no longer thy love? Why didst thou begin a winter journey without baggage? Thy stupid heart is thy foe; thy reproach will leave no traces on me.

“ Well spoke to King Djimshed,¹ his vizier, saying: ‘ Go neither joyfully nor sorrowfully to the ignorant.’ Formerly, when thou wast neither king nor general,² then day and night thou didst not resist my counsel; but now, when thou art become great, thy pennant³ and banner⁴ reach to heaven, thou art become impudent to all and weary of me. Thou hast abused and despised me, and now thou seekest hospitality from me again—thou desirest summer in winter. When thou art comfortable and merry, then thou art not mine; | and when the snow and the blast annoy thee, then art thou come indeed! . . .

“ Cut off hope of me, let me be quit of thee for God’s sake, and free me from thy converse and company!”

¹ *Djimshed*, 8, 130, 140, 301, 438.

² *Spasalari*, 450.

³ *Alami*, 449. R., 390, 923, 1285-6. Marr, IV., *rng*.

⁴ *Drosha*, R., 1016. Marr, IV., *rnc*.

THE broken-hearted Ramin said :

“ Do not so to me, O moon ! Do not reproach me so heedlessly, do not oppress me ! Is not such insult enough, and so many times depriving me of the grace of thy countenance and reproaching me with shamelessness ? . . . Again thou hast pierced my heart with the arrows of reproach. I can bear no more than this. Thou hast wounded my soul and heart. What worse than this can befall me than that thou shouldst say : ‘ I grudge thee the spot on which thou standest ? ’ Why dost thou grudge me the public square for a resting-place ? It is not Moabad’s palace. I must seem a foe or a bloody enemy, since thou grudgest me for a resting-place the high road, passable to all men. It is trodden by all, foes and friends, and envy from thee is baseless. Didst not thou say to me that prudent men at the time of quarrel should keep in their hearts a way of reconciliation. Now, why dost thou not remember this ? Is not thy race also created from the clay ? Now, if thou wilt not forgive me, and thy love is gone, what is to be, let it be !

| “ I will go hence certainly. But, heartless, loverless, 378 joyless, and impatient, grant me a token¹ from thy hair ; give me from thy headgear² something to make me forget woe ; let me take away one ringlet³ from the thick rope⁴ of thy hair which binds the hearts of all, young and old. Surely thou wilt deliver my soul from woe, since ‘ tis thou that hast thus wounded it with thine arrow ! Mayst thou

¹ *Iadigari, iadgari, iedgari*—souvenir.

² *Saburavi*, 222. R., 1126. ³ *Alqa*, 382. R. 73, 956.

⁴ *Toilo*, 827, 841.

endure separation from me as long as my soul endures its woes! I have heard that every night is pregnant,¹ and nobody knows what the morning will bring forth. And thou, too, what dost thou know? Suppose thou art no longer in the same humour² when day dawns?"

¹ *Mavne*—malign; but Chubinov in his Dictionary (*s.v.*) reads *mace*—pregnant. *Cf.* 252.

² *Buneba*.

Vis said :

“ I know this that thou sayst; but thy love will never strike me down, and thy power cannot shake me. Gall never gives the taste of sugar; paper is never made from stone, nor wine from lemons.¹ Wax is not melted into iron. An old enemy can never be made into a sincere friend. I can never be justified by thy words, nor can I be freed from trouble by seeing thee.

“ Thy conversation, shameful to me, hurts me; for hitherto (thou) by whom I have been deceived and by whom I have been pursued, long time have I remained weeping because of thine absence, and likewise have had joy in thy presence. And now I neither smile nor weep. My heart is not pained in such a manner by thee that thine elegant² conversation can cure me. My heart is no longer subject to love. Hitherto it was a fox,³ and now it is become a lion.⁴ The evil thou hast done is seated in my ear | in such a way that the road is blocked for listening to 380 more talk. Thou hast stopped mine ears; how can I now hearken to thy words? The candle of love is extinguished. I am satiated. I can no longer look, even from afar, on youths⁴ like thee.

“ That heart has forsaken me which was my foe and plagued me. Everything has changed for me. Those eyes with which I formerly gazed on thee, and those ears which heard thy converse, are so changed, that while formerly they thought to see some sun, they now look upon thee

¹ *Limo, limoni.*
Meli, 363.

² *Ena-magalit'had*—model, rhetorical.
⁴ *Lomi*, 363, 388. ⁵ *Moqme.*

like a plank;¹ (that while formerly) they hearkened to thy voice as to a bringer of good tidings, now to hear thy voice pierces me like some sword.² I did not think love had been so blind-like! Now I know the state of a lover is always bitter. Now I am at rest, glad-hearted and dry-eyed. Hitherto in vain have my days passed, and now for thee I shall not bind myself to that grief any more. I cannot exchange the charm of this world and the joy of eternity for one bad and faithless man."

¹ *P'hitzari*, 435. Cf. *p'hikali*—slab. R., 42, 1498.

² *Makhvili*, R., 952—sharp.

RAMIN thus once more said :

“ Thou hast my heart, thou art its medicine.¹ Thee also do I seek as a resource. However far thou pursuest me, still I cannot forsake thee. I know that thou hatest me, and art weary of me. The seed of enmity to me is sown in thee, but I shall never be sated with love for thee, nor have courage to separate from thee. I am indeed worthy of nothing else: insult from thee and praise from me, sulkiness from thee and tenderness from me, wrath from thee and caressing from me and love as of old. Fear cannot take me hence again, and nowhere can I find one like thee. If thou pluck out one eye, I will give thee the other also; also, however insulting and angry thou art, I will accept all as mercy and grace. From thee cursing seems to me blessing, and insult and the enumeration of reproaches please me as if I heard the voice of singing damsels² at mine ease. With the same tongue with which thou annoyest me thou makest me also to rejoice.³ I expect pity for me, | even from thy kind-heartedness.⁴ 382 Am I not like that man whom a lion affrighted in front and an elephant⁵ behind? If I stay here, surely I cannot bear so much wrath from thee; and if I go away, alas! this snow and blast will slay me! I am imprisoned between these two misfortunes. I have become powerless from these two alternatives. Though death is hard, it is

¹ *Tsamali*, 295.

² *Mutribi*, 450.

³ Cf. Shakespeare : “ Should he upbraid, I'll own that he prevail and sing as sweetly as the nightingale. Say that he frown,” etc.

⁴ *Lmobiereba*.

⁵ *Pilo*, 5, 120, 238, 344.

desirable at such a time, when it delivers a man from his woes. Fate seems to me like a very much twisted string,¹ and my heart is bound by the ringlets¹ of thy black hair. So whither can I go away hence?"

¹ A play on the double meaning of the word *alqa*, 378—string of a musical instrument and ringlet.

Vis said :

“ This which thou utterest with thy tongue is by no means in thy heart. Thou gatherest venom¹ in thy heart and sugar on thy tongue. The God who is in the heavens is not God because of thy tongue! And if thy heart be affectionate towards me, thy deeds are such that thou deceivest him who knows not thy tongue, as formerly thou didst deceive me. Now, Ramin, calm thine heart. Pour upon the fire of separation the water of patience. Just as it is better for thee to shorten the conversation, so it is better for me to gaze but a short time on thee.

“ A man brings trouble on himself when he again tries what he has already tried. | The stream that thou hast made 384 to flow from mine eyes suffices me. If a fire-worshipper² serves the fire for a thousand years, at the end the fire burns him all the same. A low-born child and a wolf³-cub⁴ will not be improved by instruction. Now, before this I have tried thee much, sometimes by threats and sometimes by entreaties,⁵ and at last it is manifest what thou wert. Half of my days on account of thee have been spent in disgrace and reproach, and now at least I shall not waste in vain those that are left. I have gained no advantage from my former love that now I should be bound by love. No longer shall I love those that love not me, nor give my heart to a perjured man. I shall not be mine own foe. My mother did not bear me for thee, nor did God give me to thee.

¹ *Zarsa*, 315, 320, var., *naghvelsa*—gall.

² *Tzetzkhlis maakhuri*—servant of the fire, 4, 149.

³ *Mgeli*, 441. R., 1571.

⁴ *Leevi* 123, R., 39.

⁵ Rhyme in the original : *mudarit'ha*, *mukarit'ha*.

“Alas! alas! the great woes I have seen bootlessly and in vain, and the consequent reproaches would surely suffice me for a thousand years! I shall never again be fond of anyone as I was fond of thee, and was faithful to thee, and yet thou hast thus slain my heart! All the good I have done thee I have repented! Love has cast me into sore grief, has made immortality bitter, and has turned my friends into foes. How long can one heart bear the grief of love and hate? Though it were a mountain of iron, it would become as thin as a hair. If indeed thou desirest love, shouldst thou not say to thyself: ‘Once she was delivered from fear and grief, and now why should she again be stupidly caught in the net?’¹ . . .”

¹ *Bade.*

RAMIN said :

“ Forsake me not, O Vis ! Thy heart and tongue bear not witness together. Thy heart cannot feel what thy tongue speaketh. Thy discourse is like a little trumpet,¹ which makes a fearful noise and has nothing in it but pure wind. Thy tongue speaks of satiety of me, but thy heart cannot justify it. May God not be my helper if thou do not indeed love me, and dost not indeed wish that I should sit there by thy side. But now my fate has so turned against me that it has become my foe, and makes thee speak heartless words.

“ Now I am dying frozen in the snow, and I can no longer bear to be here. Now is that saying become true to me : ‘ An ignorant friend is worse than a foe.’² Even if one’s own child is ignorant, one should get away from him. I stand here in the snow and frost, and thou art comfortable in a warm | house (? scented with) musk,³ and hast 386 begun to talk of a thousand vain things.

“ This is not a time for comfort and luxury ! Thy conversation and thy beauty are equally inexhaustible ; while as for me, death is thirsting for me through the keenness of the air. It befits me to die in battle, when warriors are in the mellay with me ; not thus in an unheard-of way and miserably in the snow. Now, since thou dost not want me, neither will I entreat thee. As long as I live friends will not be lacking to me. I do not doubt of my being able to live without thee. Be thou Moabad’s, and let Moabad be thine. I go ; may God keep you one another’s.”

¹ *Dumbuli*—?= *mtzire naghara*. ² Note the rhyme in the original.

³ *P'hotzkhurisa upit'ha*—lynx’s navel, 410.

Vis said :

“Let it be as thou sayest ! God grant thee peace ; may sleeping and walking both please thee, may He give thee happy days and a merry heart ; and to me, Vis, what is fitting. I am a prudent and desirable friend, and thou hast not seen nor heard of my like. By the light of these same cheeks I am the illuminating sun of man, and in fair loveliness I am the king of Ethiopia.¹ When roses are near my cheeks they lose honour, just as dry thistles² do near roses. Since thou didst see me there has been no falling off in me, but rather increase. My former brilliance is not darkened, nor is my musky³-coloured hair camphored,⁴ nor is the glitter of the pearliness of my teeth diminished, nor the uprightness of my body become bent. If I was then a new moon, I am now a sun. In beauty I am the monarch of monarchs. The cunningest of thieves⁵ cannot rob the sleeper of gold as (easily) as I can ravish 388 the heart of the waking. | The lion⁶ cannot seize the deer,⁷ nor the panther⁸ the goat,⁹ as I can the hearts of those that love me.

“Though to thee I am without honour, base, and despicable, others think not so. Now, both he (? Moabad) and I shall bethink ourselves. Thou wouldest have both the rose¹⁰ and the violet.¹¹ Such a day has fallen to my lot from such counsel. Soon will that city be laid waste where two emirs¹² dwell. Where hast thou seen two swords put into

¹ *Zanget'hi*, 343.

³ *Mushci*, 284.

⁶ *Lomi*, 379.

⁹ *T'hkha*, 317, 412.

⁴ *Kap'huri*.

⁷ *Iremi*.

¹⁰ *Vardi*.

² *Nari* (*Carduus crispus*).

⁵ *Tarali* (*trali*).

⁸ *Avaza*, 335.

¹¹ *Ia.*

¹² *Amirani*.

one scabbard,¹ or day and night together? Thou reproachest me for ignorance, and thou thyself through ignorance art become an object of hatred to thine enemies.

"If thou hadst not been ignorant and a simpleton,² thou wouldst not have behaved in the least like this. Since I am ignorant and lacking in sense, thou shouldst thank God that thou art no longer held captive by the company of such an ignorant person—and that I am the wife and familiar³ of a great sovereign and thy ruler, and, as thou thyself sayest, too stupid as such, and not thine."

When Vis had made an end of this speech, not even then was her heart softened. She leaned out of the windows⁴ and cried aloud to the sentinels⁵: "Be on your guard, sleep not to-night. It is an ill night; perchance some harm may befall the castle from the elements."⁶ She said this in such a way that hope was completely gone from Ramin.

Ramin went thence frozen by the cold, bereft of spirits and friend. Maddened by Vis's anger, he trudged through the snow. He himself comforted his own heart, and thus soliloquized :

"Be not cast down, O heart, if thy friend has forsaken thee. Oft does this befall in love; dishonour is indeed the lot of lovers. | And now, if thou survive, free thyself from 389 this sort of thing. Henceforth thou art free⁷ from all trouble, and a free man cannot bear unjustly grief and anger from a slave.⁸ A well-born man cannot do unjustly, nor will a prudent man rashly rush into dishonour. Henceforth free thyself from passion, and as long as thou livest bewail the bygone days. Think upon Vis's deeds, and say: Alas! my days spent in vain! For, save hope, only excess of woes remains to me. What pity to kill a horse in vain behind the ball since I cannot gain the goal.⁹

¹ *Karkashi*, 192. R., 72.

² *Shlui* (Armenian).

³ *Moakhe*—also "intimate friend." R., 44, 716, 1418.

⁴ *Sarcmeli*.

⁵ *Gushagi*, 121, 346, 416. ⁶ *Haeri*.

⁷ *Azati*. R., 247, 1047, *azateba*.

⁸ *Mona*.

⁹ *Helo*, at polo; ? the resting-place outside the barrier.

O heart, I said unto thee, change thy road. Aha! there is a pitfall¹ in my path! . . . O tongue, I counselled thee, too, declare not the hidden thing! Doubtless I looked in a wretched plight, for when thou madest known to Vis the secret of thy heart, she prolonged her wilfulness and pettishness until nothing pleasant remained. O heart, it had been better to have kept quiet. Lo! now I tell thee, and will it not be of use to thee? . . . A certain man rightly said that patience is a good thing even for birds."

Fate is so deceitful that passion had subjected Vis and Ramin. Fate makes sport of every man, and turns the inclinations and natures of men as a conjurer² turns a (glass) bead.³ Sometimes he is merry and sometimes sad, sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile, and persecuted by the jealous. If indeed it were not so with men, no one could caress with great appetite; none could become 390 enamoured of anybody, nor give himself up to grief and death. And if they were not deceived in this thing, | Fate could not have so turned as it did in the case of Vis and Ramin. After an unexampled affection there befell an equally unparalleled, merciless abandonment one of the other.

When the hopeless Ramin went away and Vis had gone up again, she began to repent and grieve that she had not let Ramin in. She wept, she beat her head, face, and breast without pity; she wailed, she lamented⁴ like a mourner.⁵ She murmured at her stupidity; tears of blood flowed from her eyes and ran in streams. She beat her heart on the stone. The face of her who had become stony became ashy. She sighed like a lyre,⁶ and said :

" Why do I slay myself with mine own hands? What have I done? Why have I become weary of my life? Why have I purchased mine own grief with my folly? Now, who indeed will extinguish the fire of my heart?

¹ *Ormo*, 324.

² *T'hval't'ha mktzeveli*.

³ *Mdzivi*, 299.

⁴ *Most'hkmida*—chanted. R., 219, 818, 988.

⁵ *Djiris up'hali*—lord of grief, chief mourner.

⁶ *Changi*—harp, 427. R., 101, 120, etc.

What will free me from my troubles? When can I expect a reason for life, for I never have repose from the soullessness of my fate? Alas! and woe is me! What shall I do? Who save myself has been my foe to slay myself, or how can anyone cure the ill I have done to myself?"

Then she said to the nurse:

"Thou seest what has befallen me! . . . To whom among mankind has it happened that when God has given a man a thing desired, he, in his ignorance and madness, should cast it away for his own misery? What other man was born under my planet? My good fortune came to the door, and in my folly I drove it away. I held the cup¹ of immortality, and, drunken with it, in sport I cast it from my hands. From the blast² of a black whirlwind³ the dust rose upon me; from a blue cloud misfortune rained upon me. So much snow and rain as have come down from the heavens to-night, a hundredfold as much grief has taken up its abode in my heart. From merriment I am brought to beggary, and I myself have extinguished mine own candle. Now, I know no other resource but this: that thou, O nurse, shouldst help me. Arise and quickly pursue, seize the reins, stop the ravisher of my soul, and say to him: 'O wrathful one, why should love be not tender? A man is always expecting hope, and a lover can stand a great deal of wilfulness from his beloved. Whatever thou hast done to me was done in anger, and what I said was as a joke⁴ and to try thee. There are no lovers to whom something of this kind has not happened. Who would love such a friend who could not suffer one pettish⁵ word? If I have grieved thee by my conversation, knowest thou not that thou hast grieved me just as much by thy deeds? If those deeds were seemly in thee, why (were) not these words in me? If it was befitting for thee to do as thou didst, dost thou think that I should have kept quiet?" And she added: "Stay thou there, nurse, until I come, and then I will beg forgiveness."

¹ *Dchika*, 435.

² *Grigali*, R., 847.

³ *Buki*.

⁴ *Salaghobeli*.

⁵ *Nazi*.

The nurse went hastily, and Vis followed, possessed by passion and grief, and impatient. By reason of her affection she heeded not the blast nor the cold. On her way the snow seemed like rose-leaves to her.

Ramin was stopped by the nurse, and she spoke to him. Then Vis went. She shivered with cold, and the snow was made blue by the whiteness of her body. The darkness of 392 the night was illumed by her face, and | the earth was perfumed by her hair. It was as if anew the sun had risen for Ramin. She came to Ramin ; pearls fell from her eyes as snow from the sky. She said :

" O candle of heroes, knowest thou what thou hast done to me, or in how many ways thou hast slain me and disgraced me ? That was not enough. Now again thou desirest to shame me ! I know that thou feelest no shame towards me, but why hast thou no fear of God ? Judge thyself, for every man's heart is as tender¹ as thine. It annoys every man if his friend irritates and troubles him. Every man wants his own will ; however much he gets, so much the more does he want. Just as thou art now annoyed by me, so was I, and still more, grieved by thee. Whatever pleases thee for thyself, that thou shouldst desire for another. Fortune is such that it does not rest upon one : anon on thy side, anon on mine. If it befall thy foe as thou desirest, then surely it should befall thee too as he wishes. Why should an evil-doer like thee be angry at one joking word ? See what thou hast done to me and how thou hast treated me, how many shames are heaped on me ! Because I knew of thine evil deeds, therefore thou hast cursed me ! Thou hast added the burden of abandonment to my burden ; that which thou hadst done sufficed not, and thou wentest away, didst break thine oath to me, didst wed another wife, and madest merry by her side.

" If there was no other course but to wed a wife, why didst thou write me such a letter that it was an annoyance and an insult to me and my nurse ? What hast thou gained by the deeds thou didst to us ? If thou hadst no shame in

¹ *Nazuki*—sensitive.

behaving thus towards thy friend, why wert thou not ashamed for thine oath | which thou didst swear, saying : 393
 'As long as I live I shall not break mine oath.' If it was seemly in thee to make an oath and break it, why was it not becoming in me to reproach thee with that time? Why didst thou do such a deed that to be reminded of it seems to thee a reproach? Hast thou not heard that the doing of evil will be more shameful when blame is added? The doing of evil is evil in this: that people remind one of it eternally. Since thou canst not bear reproach, why dost thou not choose peace? Prove all things, and do not to-day the things of to-morrow. If thou attack anyone and strike him, of a surety thou wilt get a blow from him in return; if thou throwest a basin,¹ a ladle² will be thrown at thee; if thou sow evil, thou shalt reap evil; if thou speak evil, thou shalt hear evil; whatsoever thou sowest, thou shalt see a return; and whatsoever thou sayest, that shalt thou receive as an answer. Unrequited, thou shalt not injure anybody.

"But this is not becoming that thou shouldst make me pay for thy sin! Be not angry; thou art the lord of fault and the oppressor. I know no sin, why should I seek forgiveness? Why dost thou not tell me: who gave thee such lordship over me?

"Be thou the judge³ and examine my guilt. I demand this: what is there shameful and not good in my head, form, and face! I am still the same that thou didst know: the same face, the same eyes and brows, the same lips and teeth, the same fair cypress⁴-like form. My face is like a fifteen-days-old moon in fulness, for it takes away the light from the sun; the rose becomes yellow near my cheeks; pearls are disgraced by my teeth; my hair is not changed (*i.e.*, improved) by scenting with musk⁵; | and if spring sees 394 my face, for shame it will fling down the leaves from the tree-tops.

"What quarrel hast thou with me except my love and

¹ *Djami*, 863.

² *Cutali* (Greek, *κουταλα*).

³ *Brdche*.

⁴ *Saro*, 430.

⁵ *Mushcoba*.

faithfulness to thee ? Am I not affectionate to thee ? am I not discontented in thine absence ? am I not thine own in everything ? am I not high born from the days of Adam¹ and unblemished,² the uglifier of pretty ones and the queen of monarchs ? More numerous even than my hairs are my admirers ! Who is adorned with beauty save me, or spotless in character, whom every man desires like life and gold ? For love of me do doughty deeds³ and trouble me but little now with entreaty. Since thou didst become quite weary of mine affection, now subdue⁴ thy heart too.

“ Do not make me notorious, do not any longer disgrace such a lover as I am ; the shame thou hast hitherto brought on me is enough ! The prudent man praises most him who keeps his secret, so that not even his shirt nor the hair of his head knows what is in his heart. Do not thou declare thine enmity towards me, desert me not wholly. Who knows but that my love may some day be useful to thee ! . . . Fate never rests on one side—after to-day comes another day. If hate comes to thee from excess of love, then surely love will follow upon enmity. As heat comes after cold, even so cold follows heat. Now hearken to what I have said.”

¹ *Adamisoba.*

² *Uzado*, 38, R., 1468.

³ *Djomardoba.*

⁴ *Moerie.*

THE heart-sore Ramin said :

“ Faultless Vis, what thou hast done I have seen, what thou hast said I have heard. Woe to that man who cannot realize his own dishonour, he is despicable in his folly ; and a very devil has made me do this thing, and I repent me greatly if he has caused me to deceive in aught ! I have travelled a long road, and God knows how many hardships I have seen from the difficulty of the road and from cold ! I am not the sort of man who cannot realize his own baseness. But thou wilt compensate what I have done, and even more ; if not, for whose sake have I laid down my greatness and wandered day and night for two months ? I expected an advantage from this journey, and this vain grief is all I have seen !

“ I sat in repose in Koistan, at ease and merry. I had a heart free¹ from thought, and I abandoned all this of mine own free will. . . . I have deserved all this that I suffer from thee. A foolish heart follows its own will. If thou wouldst test anybody, give him a gem ; if he will not have it, give him a spark.² | Fate gave to me a gem, and when I 396 cast it away, in the end it gave me in exchange a spark and a pebble ; and surely it has brought me this bad luck. When I became hopeless through Fate, it became ungracious, and said : ‘ Since it is so, I do not even know thee ! ’ . . . Thou hast done well in pursuing me ; thou hast accused me of a thousand treacheries³ and trickeries.⁴ If I had not been such an idiot, I would not have been a suitor so unhappy in such a place. Now go away, do not seize my reins, go back ; beware of loving me.

¹ *Azati*, 389, 401.

² *Nabertscali*—? spangle.

³ *Treloba*.

⁴ *Ablaoba* (Arabic).

“I do not suffer as much as thou sayest. I am, in truth, become weary of thee, and we shall never come together again for ever. I never said to thee that thou wert not a sun and moon. Thou art the fairest of all charmers, thine eyes are the wealth¹ of wizards, thy face is the gladdener of all men, thy hair is ropes² of musk,³ thou art the origin of the beauty of all fair ones, and to gaze upon thee is more desirable even than Paradise. Thou art the brightest of all luminaries;⁴ thou art the moon, the adorner of night. And even though thou art the sun and the moon, I desire not to be illumined by thy light, I am weary of thee. If thou art the water of immortality, I will not drink thee; I prefer death to staying with thee. For as peerlessly fair as thou art, the physician⁵ of the disheartened, and the balm⁶ of 397 lovers, though no one knows any remedy save thee, | thy medicine will be of no avail to me; henceforth, in however great straits I may be, I shall not come to thee for cure!

“I know thou hast the water of immortality on thy lips, and he who kisses thee will not die; but I, however much thirst and fear of death may afflict me, will never drink of that healing water. And if my passion is fire, henceforth thou wilt see it kindle no more. A smoky fire is better than being burnt up into cinders.

“Though it is a matter that troubles me not, thou hast shouted at me a thousand things, not one of which mine enemy would have said to me. Now thou hast forgotten all that, and seekest affection from me! . . . Thou art like that parent who had a blind daughter: he could not see her blindness, and sought a well-born and peerless son-in-law.⁷ Thou canst not see thy shame, and thou seekest a lover without reproach. Thou art desirous of such an one, though thou findest and considerest every man shameful in character. When didst thou experience from me such shame that thou didst not rest from reproaching? It is enough for me: I hated thee, and thou reproachest me with

¹ *Sat'havno*—capital, stock-in-trade, 436.

² *Toilo*.

³ *Mushci*.

⁴ *Mnat'hobi*.

⁵ *Mcurnali*.

⁶ *Tsamali*.

⁷ *Cf. supra*.

fickleness. The sign of fickleness and desertion appears to be more with thee at present, for thou hast not remembered thine oath, for thou didst no longer recognize me nor hear my name. How shouldst thou be so unmerciful and unkind to me? Oh! it was not as if it were for thy sake, confident in the hope of seeing thee, that I, thy former, self-sacrificing lover, roamed for thee, but like a wayfarer, homeless on a dark night, expecting to fall.

“ And even if I have sinned, waving my ten fingers¹ to thee in an oath and asking for pardon, why hast thou not pitied me? For I first thou madest me stand in the snow and 398 blast, and then didst follow with dishonourable baseness. From excess of impiety thou couldst not soften thy heart, thou desiredst my death in the snow, having become merciless as an enemy. If I sinned somewhat, I did it not to such an extent that I would not have pitied thee if thou hadst been about to die. Thou art so perjured that thou hast preferred the death of thy lover to his life. Oh! even if I had been slain by thee, what would it have availed thee, or what joy would have remained to thee?

“ Would that thy jealousy had not been such as it was! But since it is so, it was certainly better for me to know the hatred of my friend. Affliction is so far good when it shows the line between foe and friend.

“ Now, since I have found out how it is with thee, I am thine open foe, thirsting for the blood of thy merciless heart, since thou hast a less tender heart and a more perjured eye than beasts and birds. Let no one fall into grief for love of thee, for it is unprofitable.

“ Now, thanks be to God for this: that He has shown me such treatment from thee, that He has delivered from passion, and has freed my soul from the merciless and perjured. As long as I live my moon-faced, rose-named Gul is enough for me to love, and I am enough for her, for until the day of death she shall be mine. Since God and our Fate have joined us, it befits us to be content with each other.”

¹ Cf. R., 228.

Vis made reply, tearing her collar, and weeping so that a torrent¹ of blood flowed from her eyes :

“ O joy of my heart, useful and beloved as my life, thou art the good fortune of my happiness!² If I have said anything bad and oppressive to thee, thou hast done the same to me. Take not away from me thy protection, forsake me not, and embitter not my life! . . . What wonder was it if, so much afflicted by thy six months' absence and on the brink of death, I said somewhat? I spoke through love of thee. Absence cannot be without pain, and love cannot be without caprice. He whose heart is burned up with passion, to him the self-will³ of his friend is pleasing. Since I have made thee so angry by my so little pettishness,⁴ if anything were added thereto God would make this trouble 400 so grievous to me, | that I should be more and more afflicted. Since thy heart is resolved to pay no more attention to me, why shall I be pettish with thee, or why do I try thy heart with inexorable words ?

“ It has not befallen to me as I thought. I did not think that I should appear to thee as a deadly enemy on account of mine offence ; and if at that time I said that and grieved thee, see now how I seek thee with entreaties ! I used vain hastiness towards thee, and therefore I roam thus. If I was near thee in the time of joy, now in the time of trouble I will not stay away. I stand before thee buried in the snow. Since I have seen so many griefs because of thine absence, I will turn no more away nor leave thee ; and I will not let go the end of thy reins, and I will thus pitifully

¹ *Nacadi*, R., 1001.

² *Bedi bedierobisa*.

³ *Nebieroba*.

⁴ *Nazoba*.

weep until I die here, and thus shall I shame thee and have no pity on myself.

"If thou wilt hearken now to my prayer and wilt use generosity in forgiveness, until the day of my death I shall be thy purchased slave. I will hearken to thy commands as to a master's; and if I do not thus and am not docile to thee, whenever thou desirest anything of me, then thou mayst do it. The tree of troubles is soon cut down, but once cut down, it is slow to grow up, and in like manner it will be easy for thee to sacrifice me if I grieve thee."

RAMIN said :

“ I shall never love a human being again, nor shall I see again my dishonour, nor pursue this despicable behaviour. Why should a free¹ man become a slave or be melancholy in the time of joy? Many a time have I seen myself so cast down to the joy of my foes, and thus has it even now happened to me from thee; and it will never be that I shall forget the present pain of my heart. Excepting hell itself, there is no abiding-place for me, if thou again try me, the tried one. Though the sun receive light from thy face, I have no longer hope from it. If one *litra*² of stone were worth three *litras* of gems, I would even part with a hundred *litras* of stone in its scarcity in order to calm my heart, so that I might be delivered from this shamefulness in which I am.

402 “ If on the road to seek thee a thousand treasures | lay, not even that would be worth this pain; I will cut my heart from my body if henceforth it seeks thee or any other lover! Though I should remain heartless, it is much better, since it is so that it (my heart) loves every man, and it hates me, and afflicts me. Will not happiness be mine? This thy sulkiness to me to-night is a very serious matter, so that in the beginning it seems very difficult, but in the end it may prove to be easy. God sometimes sends such a thing to a man without damage, so that he may pray³ to Him.

“ Now, thus has it happened to me, I am freed from such grief. I hitherto was a bondman, and now am I become a king; I was earth, and am become sky. I am so merry that there is not even a hair of grief in my heart. I was

¹ *Azati*, 395.

² *Litra*—pound. *Cf. R.*, 998.

³ *Adjı*, 231

drunk, and am become sober ; now I shall remain without grief all the days that I have. But now I have awaked from the sleep of folly, my stupid heart has but now become prudent. . . . Since I am delivered from my dis-honourable Fate, my legs have become so light that birds cannot catch the dust of my feet. Thou seest me no longer a lover, as thou hast done hitherto. He that frees his reason from Fate is freed from troubles and relieved from manifold affliction ; wherever he may be, he does not seek gain from fear of damage.

“ Do thou thus likewise, if thou hast wits ; be like me, afflict not thyself any more about anything. Use wisdom and intelligence, for wisdom is royalty. If thou pursuest passion for a hundred years even, in the end thou shalt see nought profitable remain in thy hands—only wind.”

Vis was completely in Ramin's hands, and she grew faint from passion ; she trembled both from love and cold ; from the narcissi (her eyes) blood flowed upon the rose (her cheek), and she said :

“Thou art the cause of my life, the sight of mine eyes, and the joy of my heart ! I know I have angered thee and not done well. For thou art on the one hand my love, and on the other hand a king-like one, a famous monarch. Without thee I desire not life and existence in the world. Since I have made thee angry and my sayings have made thee gloomy, on account of the bitterness of this I eat up my arms with my teeth. Shoot not the arrow of enmity at me, and do not dishonourably oblige me to depart. Now let us both be happy together, mention not the past, do 404 not be weighed down by my former disrespect. | This is grievous from an equal or an enemy, but not from a lover like me. However great and powerful might be a monarch ruling over the whole earth, if he fell in love with somebody,¹ he would become as humble for her sake as if he were at her feet. Who calls the caprices of lovers quarrels ? Nor do they consider it shame to suffer from them.

“Now be patient with my pettishness. Thou, too, hast been bereft of thy heart for my sake ; thou, too, hast been a booty.² Caress me ! For thee I have become so witless a creature ! Thou shouldst blame thyself for my craziness ; I never wish to afflict thee. What answer wilt thou give to

¹ *Ga vist'huis midjnurdes*—a peculiar old Georgian construction, instead of *gamidjnurdes vist'hvis(me)*. Cf. R., 1054 : *she-vit'h-vatqvev = vit'h shevatqvev* = “as I remarked,” “as I noticed.”

² *Alap'hi*, R., 55, 440.

God for the taking of my blood, or what worse can befall me than this, that I should no longer have either heart¹ or lover? For whom shall I lose my heart? She would no more have my love than I my heart! But if God is the Judge of the earth, He will not reject my plaint. Would that my heart approved what I have done! And that thou wert my lover completely, and not Gul's.²

“How can (thy) heart even speak of going away from me? Art thou not he whom they called constant? Alas! for by my fate even thou art become weary of me! What has become of all thine oaths that thou dost not remember even one of them now? Therefore I instructed my foolish heart, and told myself not to fall in love with such a fickle one, since (quoth I) thou knowest the inconstancy of Ramin's heart! | But it (my heart) hearkened 405 not; the advice was in vain, and I know not at all how it will be with me in the end. Why dost thou make me wait here so long? and how long wilt thou cause tears of blood to flow from mine eyes?

“If thou art disposed to come back, I adjure thee to come back. The cold here is killing me; and if thou art not coming back, take me away with thee whithersoever thou goest. I will never leave thee. However hard the road may be, with thee it will be easy to me; however shelterless I may be with thee, and undesired by thee, if thou cut me not off from thy hand and thy bosom, thou canst not make me lose hope. I cannot live a moment without thee. Though my heart were even a rock in hardness, it could not bear separation from thee. Behold, thou desirest to take away the choice of my soul, and to leave me wandering and melancholy in the fields. Go, and thou wilt take the colour from my face and the power from my body, and patience and wits. Why art thou so merciless and hard-hearted to me that thou wilt not be melted by so many entreaties?”

The heart-ravisher Vis entreated, but Ramin's heart was

¹ ? *Guli*—? *Gul*.

² The play on the word *Gul* is impossible to translate.

not thereby softened. It was like adamant¹ toward her. Like the anger from Ramin's unsoftened heart, the snow from the sky and the wind from the mountains increased on account of their not separating, so until dawn neither the one ceased nor the other. Vis could not catch Ramin, and, grown hopeless, Vis and her nurse turned back, frozen with the cold, and weeping.

The moon (Vis) went away, the beautifier of night. Her heart burned with smokeless fire, her eyes had turned to blood through weeping, her body trembled from cold, like 406 one stricken with ague; | and because she had lost hope of Ramin, a thousand times she besought death from God. She said :

“ Woe is me! woe to the unhappy fate which has overtaken me! How can I endure this sorrow? Against me my fate wars in enmity, until, imperceptibly, it wins from me all I have. O nurse, thou canst not know anyone more wretched and near to death than I am, if from henceforth I go forth or love anybody. And if henceforth thou see me enamoured, pluck out both mine eyes with thy hands. My spirit in my body has become as powerless as one lifeless in the tomb. If I die in this wretchedness and heretofore heart-woundedness, I can be lowered into no earth in the world. What worse can befall me than to be cut off from lover, soul, and life! Or what in love can be harder than this? Now I know that black will not dye to any other colour.”

¹ *Almasi.*

THE UNION OF RAMIN AND VIS

WHEN Vis, the heart-ravisher, went away, pitifully heart-weary from Ramin's wrath and from loss of hope, Ramin began to reproach himself. In his affliction the elements¹ seemed to him like a wrathful dragon,² owing to the blast he could no longer see before his eyes; the violence of the elements and wind increased to such a degree that it would have overturned an elephant.³ Snow blocked Ramin's way; from time to time he stood unquiet in the snow; his body was freezing, and his heart was burning in fire. He said to himself: "Why was I sullen to the ravisher of my heart, the life-robbing, life-giving Vis?" He repented, and cursed his intelligence. From his eyes blood flowed instead of tears. With a loud voice he wept and roared so much that his soul was on the brink of coming forth. He turned, put his horse to a gallop, he hastened, he fell before Vis; he knelt, he entreated, he adjured her, he besought forgiveness, saying:

"My sin is doubled by my stupidity now, and from shame I know not what I should say. But the | means of for- 408 giveness is entreaty. Forgive me, the greatly sinning, who have no mouth left to speak to thee. As thou art more in beauty than every creature, even so do more to me in pardoning. I have twice by my folly deprived myself of favour⁴ before thee. Now for shame I have no eyes to look upon thee, nor can my tongue ask pardon. My heart faints for shame of thee; my tongue is tied in a knot for fear of thee: I can neither ask pardon of thee, nor can I live with-

¹ *Haeri.*

² *Veshapi.*

³ *Pilo*, 433.

⁴ *Piris tsqali.*

out thee! I no longer know mine own road, I now remain pitiful, powerless, and friendless. . . . My heart is full of grief, patience has departed from me; I have no longer a word (to say), and my soul is diminished! I have no hope of life, nor word (to ask) for pardon. The seed of love for thee has not been scattered from my heart even for a moment. May that God who created me cause thee now to become unmindful of my sin. But now my fate and the devil¹ have constrained me and deprived me of the reason befitting thee. If thou dost not forgive me from now, and art still of the same opinion, I will immediately slay myself, and I will pity thee no more. I will seize thee in my hands and kill thee, too, and also I will slay myself, for I love none as much as thee. When I shall no longer be, neither shalt thou any longer exist. I want a lover at the hour of death so that we may be together at the resurrection. When a lover like thee is near me—and in my possession—the hardness of death is made easy to me. . . . Thou art 409 both my Paradise and the beauty of the world. | Who would wish to lose both these? In eternity I shall ask of God that thou be near me, and here the thought of this is my comforter, and causes me to forget grief. Now I say this: If I did thee an evil deed then, do not thou such evil to me. If I, being bad, have done ill, do thou, being good, in like manner do good to me. To soften thee I lay myself even beneath thy feet, that henceforth I will hearken to thy commands like a bought slave, and will serve thee humbly as the ground. Be gracious to my sin. Make me not to slay myself nor pour on thee my blood. I am thine, and do not thou regret being mine. I hope never to be divided from thy love."

The heart-wounded Ramin spoke after this manner, and wept unceasingly, and struck his breast with his fist. When he had done this somewhat, and they were grieved by each other, again they began to converse and prolonged reproaches, so that their conduct surprised even Fate. Vis's heart was like a mountain, and her face a flower upon

¹ *Eshma.*

it; but the snow of the mountain was not melted by Ramin's converse, nor did the flower fade through that cold.

When dawn showed his banner,¹ they were both afraid of daybreak and exposure, and words failed. Their erring hearts found the road, and the devil of enmity fled back. They took each other's hands and went up to the tower. They freed from affliction their hearts, which had been tortured by pain. They shut the door of the room. From joy they were like a freshly blossoming garden. They lay down exhausted, frozen by the cold; | in a skin scented with 410 musk² on one couch, they were united like one soul in two bodies. They were just as they had desired. Their couch was full of roses, and their pillow was bright with the sun and moon; from their faces and hair the room was filled with fragrance. As much as they had wished for union, so much did it please them to be together. They did not separate from each other for a moment from head to foot, nor was there room for a hair to pass between them.

Thus were they for a month, so that no one knew what they were doing.³ They reposed not from joy, sporting, and gambolling, nor from embracing and kissing each other. When they desired it, they received food and wine according to their wishes. It was not dull for them. Although formerly they had been heartsore through separation and affliction, now they cured each other's hearts with the multitude of kisses and casting lots⁴; they plastered each other.

Shah Moabad sat powerful and merry on the royal throne. He had not even an idea of what Ramin was doing, nor did he suspect that his brother Ramin had left his own country and was lying day and night by the side of his (Moabad's) wife inseparably; that they were making merry together and laughing at him, and in the joy of these two months⁵ had forgotten the difficulty and affliction of their six months'

¹ *Drosha*.

² *Photzkhuris upi*—lynx's navel, 386.

³ Their affairs.

⁴ *Tsilt'ha miqolit'ha*, 55, 69. The meaning here is doubtful.

⁵ Cf. preceding paragraph, "a month."

separation. He to whom Fate has given by lot the desire of his heart, why should he remember the woes of a lover or take care of himself?

When they had rejoiced in being together two months, 411 and had [had their share of the joy of the world, spring came. Ramin said to Vis :

“ It is no longer proper for us to be thus. It is better immediately to appear and to see Shah Moabad before I am discovered.”

The discreet Ramin bethought himself of a plan. He went down from the castle at midnight and travelled half a day’s journey. Then at dawn he turned back and directed his steps towards the city of Marav. Openly he came along the high road and entered the city gates alone. As befitted one coming from afar, he showed himself to all in a weary state and dusty. He came as a traveller to the gate of the palace. Then they said to Shahinshah : “ The sun of glory is come forth upon the earth ; Ramin the beautifier of the earth is come, his face like the full moon and his form like the cypress,¹ wearied by the length of the road and cold, and behold he stands at the gate.”

Shahinshah rejoiced, as was just ; he commanded, and Ramin came before him. He did homage and laid his face on the earth, paid his compliment ; Shahinshah pleasantly greeted and kissed him. Then he asked news of Ramin. He told him of the trials of the long road, and said :

“ Exalted,² renowned, and just king ! May thy name be above all monarchs and kings, and may thy foes be beneath thy feet ! May your³ name be lofty up to heaven, 412 and may your fate be renownedly victorious ! [One needs a heart like adamant⁴ in hardness and more than an iron-stone⁵ mountain to bear not seeing thee and absence from your service. I have been to some extent brought up in your bosom, I have life from you, and I have such great

¹ *Saro*, 430.

² *Maghali*.

³ Note here and elsewhere the mixture of singular and plural in the personal pronoun.

⁴ *Andamati*.

⁵ *Maghniti*, 104.

honour from you that I have attained to the sky. I cannot bear not seeing you, and I am afflicted at not having done you homage (for so long). Knowest thou not this: not only am I of your race, to stand at your gate as a door-keeper is for me a favour from God? I can never endure absence from your service. As you commanded, I went to Gurgan, and by my sword I cleared mountain and plain of the foe. I so subdued Koistan that there a goat¹ makes a lion² hearken to its command. From Musul and Aran even unto Sham,³ not an enemy of yours is seen. I your slave had by fate from God and from you everything that heart could desire save that I was absent from you and could not pay you my homage. However generous the Creator of heaven and earth is, He does not fulfil every human desire. So with me, I desired day and night to see you, and at last I could no longer bear being away. I came away as swiftly as a stream from a mountain top; I came alone; I hunted on the way, and like a lion I ate raw flesh. Now, since God has had mercy on me, and I have seen you in peace, and done homage to you, I have taken hope in my fate, since it is evident that God has not created me for misfortune. My heart is made merry and my one soul is become a thousand in joy; my crown reaches to heaven. I, merry, drink three cups of wine. 413 Whether I go or not to the land you gave me, whatever you command I will do it. What better can befall me than this, that I should not spare myself in obeying your command? Then am I indeed living and immortal when I sacrifice my soul to fulfil your wish."

When Shahinshah heard this pleasant discourse and these measured⁴ words from Ramin, he was pleased, he thanked him, and said:

"What thou hast done pleases me; thou hast chosen words of truth and hast shown thy bravery. The sight of thee rejoices my heart. To see thee for one day does not suffice me, nor can I be sated with seeing thee a short time.

¹ *T'hkha*, 388.

² *Lomi*, 433.

³ 453 ? Damascus.

⁴ *Shetsqobili*—metrical.

Now it is still winter, what can there be save drinking and merrymaking? We will make the minstrel damsels to sing, and we shall stay together. When spring comes, and the days are warm and the air pleasant, many are the travellers going thither (*i.e.*, to Ramin's land); so that, however far thou wishest, I will go with thee towards Gurgan. I wish to go forth to hunt; it is wearisome to stay at home in spring. Now go and bathe thyself in the bath, change thy clothes, and repose thyself."

When the merry Ramin went to the bath, Shahinshah 414 sent him many | garments. And Ramin spent three months before him in rejoicing and saw no trouble, but only his heart's desire. Fate sent everything just as he wished; secretly he saw Vis and found his heart's desire in her. In joy they were together; their secret was hidden. They met in such a place that Moabad had not an idea of it, and their affair was not declared, and no one perceived it.

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MOABAD GOES TO THE CHASE

WHEN spring came, mountains and plains began to adorn themselves, the meadows blossomed, the world and the air were like Paradise, the earth in beauty was like the sky, the old earth became young with roses, violets, and many kinds of flowers; the earth was like a kingly treasure-house; the birds began to twitter, and the nightingale on the rose chanted many kinds of notes. The earth in its variety of colour had become like Chinese¹ brocade;² the sky purified the air, and the earth smiled with dew; the beasts began to roam the plains, and the dry branches of the trees began to have sap and to put forth flowers; the narcissus began to become drunken. The gardens and orchards in beauty were like fair damsels, and the earth became merry-hearted as at a royal banquet. Everybody, even the afflicted, desired to play in the fields; they would not let go from their hand the cup with ruddy wine, like Khuasrav³-Shirin. When they were in the orchard, | the 416 zephyr heaped gold and its like on their heads, and friends joyfully offered their souls to friends. The rain wiped the rust from the verdure, and the verdure from the heart of man. The neighbourhood of Marav was fair and shone like Paradise. The earth was moist as Shusht'har.⁴

In that verdure of the earth Moabad desired forthwith to sport and hunt in the field. Hastily he called his

¹ *Chinuri*, 865, 451.

² *Stavra*, 823, 488.

³ *Khuasro*, 14, 86, 451. Cf. *Noshrevan*, 288. The passage is grammatically obscure.

⁴ *Shusht'hari* (?).

grandees and summoned his hosts, and said : “ We go forth to hunt in the land of Gurgan ; make ready ! There is great plenty of game and beasts there.” The hosts began to prepare, and Vis, hearing that Ramin was going thither, was deprived of sense and reason like one possessed ; she had no longer prudence and patience. She said to the nurse :

“ What is more marvellous than this, that a living man should desire life no longer ! Now this will befall me : that if I endure this, life will certainly be burdensome to me. Even a thousand times have I been wounded unto death by the sword of him. Now Shah Moabad (may God send a raven¹ to meet him, and may he be ill-starred and have an unpropitious hour !) wishes to go hunting in Gurgan ! How can I bear separation from Ramin ? Or how can I be delivered from this detested devil ? If Ramin goes away to-morrow, truly my heart cannot follow him, for I shall die thinking of his departure. Alas ! woe is me ! that his horse should set its nailed² foot on mine eyes, and however many steps it takes so many brands will it set upon my heart. I will be a better guard³ on the road day and night

417 than the king’s young men.⁴ | I will cause a spring to flow from mine eyes, and from it I will give wayfarers water to drink. Surely God will hear my prayer and will deliver me from woes and mischances ; for save Moabad I have no troubles, for he is a doer and sayer of evil. Surely God will deliver me, and I shall not have troubles every moment. Now go, nurse, and tell Ramin from me what a state I am in without him. Learn his intentions towards me, what he will do : will he again abandon me and cause my foes to rejoice, or not ? Will he go away to-morrow with Moabad ? Say to him from me : ‘ Who will remain alive till thy coming ? Who has a heart so inconsiderate that she could live without thee ? If thou goest, when thou

¹ *Qorani*, 121, R., 591, 1243, 1246, 1284, 1338. Ill-omen for travellers.

² *Lusmari*, 74, 222, 260, 430.

³ *Gushagi*, 388, 431.

⁴ *Moqme*, 419. Cf. R.

comest back, by thy sun, thou shalt no longer find me alive. If my death displeases thee, go not with him, think out some pretext for staying at home. We shall be merry here, and let him (Moabad) go, the melancholy and gloomy one, wherever he likes.' "

The nurse went and told Ramin. By these words she sprinkled salt on his wound anew. Ramin's heart was palpitating with grief, and he sat frenzied. At this message he began to weep, and the thought of separation pierced his heart like an arrow. A little while he wept, then his heart became calm, because his youth was always in danger and affliction, and he never had complete joy for an hour. Then he said to the nurse :

| "In the meantime Moabad has not spoken to me about 418 this nor commanded it. Perhaps I am forgotten. And if he does command and invite me, then perhaps I can find some excuse : I will say now I have sore legs. When he hears this, he will certainly not invite me. Thus will I speak : 'You yourself know how I love hunting ; but it is impossible to travel without legs. Doubtless you have heard but now how I was lying down from pain in my legs.' When he hears this he will no longer invite me. I shall stay here in Marav without Shahinshah. If God have mercy on me, and it be thus, what better can befall me ?"

When the nurse reported this news to Vis, they rejoiced as if both had become immortal, and as if in accession to royalty. Her colour came and she returned to her senses.

In the morning the trumpet¹ began to call Shah Moabad and his armies, and there was heard the noise of the moving of the troops. An inexhaustible host went out. Ramin came before Moabad unarmed. Shahinshah looked at him and said, in the presence of the grandees :

" What new knavery² is this, and what is the reason that thou art come thus unready ? Can it be that thou art again sick after thy wont ? Now go, take what thou wilt

¹ *Buci*, 200, 885. R., 46, etc.

² *Bidchoba*.

from the arsenal.¹ I shall not go anywhere without thee, in no way can it be pleasant to us without thee."

There was no help for it; willy-nilly, he began to get ready to go to Gurgan. The heart of Vis immediately found this out, and she gave herself up to grief; when she was quite certain of it her heart broke. Ramin unwillingly journeyed, his heart wounded by a diamond²-pointed 419 arrow | and wearied of joy. When he went away, Vis lost patience and lay down senseless. Her heart, accustomed to rejoicing, became like a pheasant³ torn by the claws of a falcon.⁴ She wept and said :

" I cannot find a friend like the first, and I cannot sow love like the first love ! I cannot be calm without my friend. Nothing else seems profitable to me. Though weeping and crying will bring me to shame, they were invented by man for such an hour of need. And if thou dost not believe this which is in my heart, and my weariness of life, O nurse, behold the witness of my heart, my yellowed face and crimson tears. I no longer weep for my lover, I weep for my life ; for since Ramin has gone away, my spirits have followed after him. How can so much grief find room in my one heart ? From continual woe and lack of repose I am poured out, and I have no power of enduring."

From the tower she saw Ramin unwillingly journeying ; girt with his armour, he came to Moabad's side tearful, yellow-faced, not having greeted and taken leave of Vis. Vis's heart was as agitated as a drowning man's in the sea. Then she began to say to herself :

" Now I send a large greeting to the desired lover, my kind-hearted friend, the heart-reiver, the *emir*⁵ of fair ones, the lord of beauties, the monarch of lovely ones, the 420 ornament of youths,⁶ and (I send) | immeasurable longing. He went away without seeing me, and doubtless he has again forsaken me. He has gone to the army, and he has driven an army of cares into my heart. . . . I have bound

¹ *Sadchurdchle.*

² *Almasi*, 821.

³ *Khhokhhobi*, 137.

⁴ *Kori*, 199, 316.

⁵ *Amiri*, 425.

⁶ *Moqme*, 416.

my heart with a thousand ropes¹ of steel.² It has torn them all and gone to travel with thee. Ramin! If I remain (alive) without thee, I shall bewail the separation till thou come. I will send the smoke of my heart as a cloud, and my tears as its rain I will pour on thine abode. I will wash down the dust from thy worthy face. Thy face is a spring flower, and the rain and dew of spring will beautify it."

When he had gone one day's journey, Ramin was as if he did not know his way, and on the road he sighed. It was not strange that he should sigh, since this is the wont of the sick. As his heart dictated, he lamented and said to it :

"I have not seen a night so grievous as yesternight, for kissing was like an arrow (?i.e., it is gone, sped). Now I see such a day that my soul is a goat,³ and love is a panther.⁴ Whither has the joy of those days gone. My heart had been emptied of its former griefs. My couch was full of the sun, and my pillow of roses. I to whom such an hour has happened, now how can I endure such a day as this, or with what eyes gaze on the place lacking her? This is not a day ; it is a fire of the soul and a mischance of love. May God never bring upon any lover such a state, heart-burned and impatient. If Fate can reckon, it will measure this one day as a thousand years."

| When Shahinshah arrived at a resting-place,⁵ the heartless Ramin went before him. He had a thousand witnesses on his face that patience had stolen from his heart. Before him he neither drank wine nor made merry. Like fire being added upon fire, so the harder did it become every hour. He had no repose from his sick body and sore heart.

¹ *Toilo*, 279.

² *Basri*, 267.

³ *T'hkha*, 817.

⁴ *Avaza*, 388.

⁵ *Sadgomi*.

WHEN Vis was separated from her longed-for Ramin, joy and gladness grew weary of her. The rose had always been a sun, and now it became a moon ; like it, she grew yellow, and she gave up eating and drinking ; she could not spare a moment from Ramin and news of him. She scratched her face, senseless with grief. She said to the nurse :

“ Seek a means for my life and for my union with Ramin, so that my departed friend may return. O nurse, have pity on my unbearable condition ; think upon my youth and mine upbringing by thee. I cannot endure to be without him. Hearken to my tale, and I will tell thee everything without concealment, and thou shalt understand. When thou didst show me Ramin, then with hatred to Moabad and his evil doing towards me my heart froze towards him and I gave my heart to Ramin in such childishness and folly that it is no longer in my power.

423 Now I am mad and senseless. | In lack of heart I am like one drunken. Be not astonished at my state, do not mock me. Death pleases me more than his absence. Formerly there was only that one thing, but now both death and the thought of separation afflict me. One fire burns both thee and me, O nurse : mine in the heart which I cannot extinguish, thine in the bosom. With water, fire is a coward ; but instead of being extinguished by my tears, it is increased more and more ; I pour water upon the fire of my heart. Who has ever seen water making fire burn ? Last night it was as if I lay on thorns¹ and iron, so little rest had I.

¹ *Ecali*, R., 857-8.

And now it is day, dinner time, but to me it is dark as night. Gazing on the face of my love, I have from him my light, as well as the balm of life, and from his lips a plaster.¹ As long as I am away from Ramin I cannot see light and I cannot find a balsam. I know not what my fate has in store for me ! I will go away in an unseemly manner, I will roam, I will wander about with shepherds, and I will never see another lover. The stream of my tears is carrying away the city, and my pitiful sighing rends rocks ! What shall I do, by whose side shall I sit, whom shall I look on instead of Ramin ? I will not gaze on the world, I will close mine eyes, because everything I see displeases me. What is the avail of what I have seen, except that I have been bereft of sleep, life, and repose ! I embitter mine existence when I try the tried (*i.e.*, what I have tried before). Now thou hast heard all my affair and tale, seek a means so that my spirits may be kept in me ; be of some use to me !”

She spoke with tears.

| The nurse thus made answer :

424

“ One should not grieve about what one has done oneself, it is of no use. This weeping and grieving is of no avail to thee, it only adds grief to grief. Thine equals² are always merry and proud in their desires. Thou art always complaining and weeping. I am driven mad by thine excessive grief. A man wants pleasure in the world and plaster for his wounds. Thou hast both plaster and wounds in thy hands. Why are thy hands tied from using a means ? God has given thee the fulness and glory of sovereignty. Thou hast a renowned mother like Shahro ; as brother, a faultless youth like Viro ; a lover like Ramin, a self-sacrificing friend to thee, awaiting kingship ; thou hast a faultless king in thy hands. Glory and living according to thy desire is a gift of God to thee ; why dost thou beat about the bush³ that thou seekest any other resource save love ? Then, since thou art always in this grief, seek some such means

¹ *Malama*, 178, 192, 279. ² *Stsorni*—? people of your years.

³ *Mizezob*, 878—quibble, cavil.

for the lover; for now thou hast every opportunity and time that you may be near each other fearlessly. Thou hast a treasure house full of possessions, and as a strengthener of thy back thou hast countless hosts. Moabad's deeds have greatly and many a time afflicted thee. Now his wrath, great as a mountain, has not diminished, and his devil has not become more beautiful. What he was, he remains the same, and thou, too, art the same. Truly you will be for ever in the same plight as hitherto you have been. Now, if thou art human, seek a means of life for thyself. There is the soil and there is the seed too. And before Moabad finds out and slays the three of us—
 425 for he sits hidden like a lion in enmity to us, | thirsting for our blood, so that when he has an opportunity he will certainly slay the three of us—now busy thyself about a plan immediately, that you may be together. Thou wilt not easily find one so fit for royalty as Ramin! Put the royal crown upon his head, seat yourselves both upon the throne, like the sun and moon in the sky. There is no one upon the earth so royal and noble that he will not desire you and will not help you then! Thy brother Viro will help you; besides, all the emirs¹ and kings will gird on the girdle² like slaves in your service. The army and grandes are completely weary of serfdom to Moabad, they are become hostile, and in his place desire either Viro or Ramin as monarch. Thou hast shown great favour to them, and hast made many entreaties for their sake. Doubtless in thy service they would be very zealous. Thou hast never been able from thy youth to enjoy love; now good fortune has appeared to thee, and by love has changed thy grief to joy. From my counsel take joy as thy lot, and do whatever thou desirest to do. Whensoever thou decidest to strike, thou canst never find a better time than this. Neither Shah Moabad nor his soldiers are in Marav. You do not hide your hostility one to the other, and thou seemest to him like a bloody foe, and many a time has he sought the death of thee and of Ramin. Why dost thou wait? All the treasure is in thy hands.

¹ *Amirani*, 388, 419.

² *Sartqeli*.

He has seen great pains in collecting the treasure, and God has given it all to thee without trouble. Buy royalty for thyself, even with his gold! Before he eats his supper, hasten thou and eat thy dinner. If thou desirest to follow this counsel, | write a letter to Ramin, propose the plan, and 426 tell him to come back, and he will come faster than the wind and Moabad. When he comes, we shall seek some other means, and we shall embitter Moabad's lot."

When Vis heard this from the nurse it pleased her, and the flower of joy blossomed on her face.

VIS'S LETTER TO RAMIN

VIS, heartsore because of separation, wrote a letter to Ramin ; she was so wretched that blood flowed from her members and she used it as ink :

“ O beloved, nurturer of love, and, in absence, choker¹ of joys ! When I wrote a letter to my friend, I wrote with such a pitiful heart, that if thou readest this letter on a rock even thou wilt hear sighing from the rock like the notes of a lyre.² From her who abandons not her friend, to the hard-hearted ; from her who is weary through love, to the heartless one ; from the sleepless slave to the sun of monarchs, like unto the moon ; from the sick lover, the maker of foes to rejoice, the afflicted because of the absence of her friend, the consumed, the one who has lost happiness, one to whom the world is become embittered, the weeping one, the wretched beggar,³ the tearful-eyed, the bloody-hearted, the wounded-hearted, the witless, the deprived of air, the yellow-cheeked, | the gloomy, the afflicted, whose hair is her couch —a letter of impatience to her longed-for one, from such a being that there is none more wretched upon the earth.

“ My heart, with my body, burns with the fires of separation from thee ; I am aflame like a candle, but I am in a worse state than it, because it, though it burns, is completely consumed also ; but I am always afame, I burn and I am afflicted with inconsumability. Every moment I bathe myself with tears, and yet I cannot extinguish myself. I am smoky-hearted like a dark cloud, and I am the feast of mischance and the comrade of woe. I am drowning in the

¹ *Mnasebeli.*

² *Changi*—harp, 390.

³ *Miskin*, 282.

sea of separation, pitiful, always weeping. I have one hand upon my heart and one upon my head. The ruby¹ of my lips has become turquoise,² and every man burns with compassion towards me. One eye and a thousand clouds are raining, one heart and a thousand kinds of woe. Separation has revealed my secret, it writes with blood and tears upon my yellow cheek. Such a fire is kindled in my heart that both patience and joy are consumed. Mine eyes are like a sea from the excessive flow of water, in which I have lost sleep from mine eyes. When the sleeping place is full of water, how can sleep be there? With this hand by which I have written this letter, even with it have I folded up the couch of joy. My heart is fleeing from excess of grief, and my form is exhausted by torture!

“Why hast thou taken far from me thy sun-like face, more | beloved even than my life? How can I seek heart- 429 desire and joy on the earth since in my form neither my heart remains nor my soul? Or how can I endure life, since God has decreed to give me a life without soul and heart! How can I remain without it, since I have no repose from thee? To-day I have forgotten, from increase of woe, my former desire of death! Since I have been absent from gazing on thee I have become emaciated as (one of) thy hairs. By day I gaze on the sun for its likeness to thee, and at night on the darkness for its resemblance to thy hair. If woes as many as mine were to come upon a mountain, it would give forth blood instead of water.

“My friends counsel me, and mine enemies reproach me, and say I have become a byword in the land. But not thus can I be torn from affection and love for thee. Do not wrath, watchfulness, and scolding in giving advice, only make the lover more possessed, as it has done in my case? From day to day I grow worse. This which troubles me is not affection, it is a rainy cloud increasing from day to day.

¹ *Laloba*—rubiness; *lali*, 299.

² *Pherozi*, 299. R., 468, *p'hirusi*.

This is not separation, but it is a poisonous falchion¹ in my heart and soul ! Why, indeed, should a sensible man fall in love if he can help it ? Why give himself so much pain ? Why is he pleased at so much restlessness and bitterness for himself ? Who knows how many griefs I have endured in thine absence ? And if all lovers are in this trouble and pitiable like me, how is it that any trace of love remains ? Many a time have I mocked and laughed at lovers, and now 430 instead I weep for them and repent. I have laughed at them as their enemy, now in compassion they weep for me. Thus am I more pitiable than all lovers !

“Thou hast seen me formerly, how I was glittering like the sun ; now my fulness is faded, and the hue of my cheek has become saffroned.² As a fruitful tree is bent by fulness, I am bent by an abundance of woe. I, the cypress³-like, am crooked like a bow,⁴ and like the string⁵ of a bow my form is become thin. Thou hast left me here so pitifully, and hast put the steed of separation to a gallop. The dust of thy horse is in mine eyes like a nail,⁶ and thine image has remained in mine eyes, and thy name on my tongue. My soul is darkened, and my heart is faint from desire and longing for thee. They say to me : ‘How long wilt thou sigh ? Thou art exhausted by thinking. A departed lover is like a day that is past ; be not sad if thou hast heart and wit.’ But my heart does not bear witness to what they say. My wine is poured out, but the smell⁷ is not gone. It is its (? the heart’s) night, and now the sun has set ; my land is wholly darkened. I am in the hope that it will come at the morning hour. Every flower and rose appears in spring ; surely my rose, too, will appear.

“O fair, tall-formed, moon-faced, sweet-smelling, fragrant, graceful, curly-haired, I am thine own undivided friend ! Thou thyself knowest I would sacrifice my soul for thee, not only once but a thousand times. One of thy hairs is so dear to me that I prefer it a thousand times more than life.

¹ *Dashna.*

² *Zap’hrani*, 280.

³ *Saro*, 393, 411.

⁴ *Mshvildi.*

⁵ *Sabeli, sabmeli*—cord.

⁶ *Lusmari*, 260, 416.

⁷ *Suli (suni)*—soul.

I need thee, for I do not want a moment's life without thee.

| I seek thee continually. I seek not joy without thee. 431
 Many times hast thou tried me, and thou knowest my
 constancy, for which thou, too, hast not been ungrateful.
 Now I, that lover of thine, am mad and restless for thee, to
 which mine eyes, shedding blood, bear witness.

“Come, look at my witnesses, that they may convince
 thee of my plight! Come, look upon my red cheeks—
 now yellow, like one who has been sick for ten years!
 Come, try my tears which have flowed like Djeon,¹ and my
 land dyed with blood from that Djeon! Come, and thou
 shalt see my form bent by solitude and by thinking of thee;
 for joy is afraid of me, and I am afraid of men, as my heart
 has avoided every thought but of thee! Come, that thou
 mayst see my sad state! There is nobody with me any
 more and I am gone forth from all joys, as if someone
 pricked² out with a knife both mine eyes from moment to
 moment! Come, that thou mayst see how my affection
 and love for thee have increased from day to day, even like
 thy beauty!

“If thou hasten not, thou wilt not find me alive. If thou
 wishest to come in time, tarry not a single moment. If
 thou art sitting down, rise up; and if thou art standing,
 sit not down again. Rest not a moment. When thou hast
 read this letter, travel day and night. Think of her witless
 and impatient till thou comest. Mine eye is fixed on thy road
 like a sentinel.³ And if separation from thee still longer
 afflicts me, certainly I shall not remain in my right mind.
 Until thou come I am always asking God to give me
 endurance, and not let me die without seeing thee; | and 432
 surely by His mercy He will do this and fulfil thy heart's
 desire, and will bring us to the presence of each other
 safely. He will become weary of our so many woes and
 expectations of mischance.

“But now, if God gives me to see thy face and then I die,
 it will no longer matter to me!⁴ If I die being in this state

¹ *Djeon*, 288.

² *Mchkhuletda*.

³ *Gushagi*, 417.

⁴ *Mgama*.

of affliction, the smoke from my heart will darken the earth and will make sooty¹ the sky."

When Vis had finished the letter, she hastily sent her trusty slave on a swift-going² camel.³

¹ *Daadchuartlebs.*

² *Djamazi* (Arabic).

³ *Aklemi*, 442. R., 447, 1402.

RAMIN'S SOLILOQUY

HER trusty and faithful slave went, according to her desire, swift as a bird, and presented Vis's letter to Ramin.

When he saw it, his heart began to beat, and he trembled like one ague-stricken. When he who was longing for her saw the letter written by her and read it, wholly like a madman, his road was no longer open to him. Many times he laid the letter to his mouth, set it upon his eyes and breast, kissed it; through impatience he could not keep back the tears from his eyes, and the smoke of his heart ascended to heaven. He uttered many fine words, such as are not often heard:

“O heart, how long wilt thou endure such a condition, for thy month is continual woe and thy year mischance? . . . O heart, thus should it not be with one who seeks his desire. O unworthy, do something so that thou mayst be understood and mayst not be affrighted like me, heartless, by a sharp sword, an enraged elephant,¹ a hungry lion.² Thou art neither affrighted by cold nor by heat, | thou art 434 afraid neither of the blast nor of the waves of the sea. Since thou art a lover, and the most pitiful of all past and future lovers and most afflicted, why dost thou pity thyself? Why this cowardice of thine? Why dost thou not seek means of aid? How long wilt thou inquire of thy planet? how long wilt thou complain and weep? How canst thou help another if thou canst not help thyself? Why should anyone be afflicted for thee, since even love is a coward? Even

¹ *Pilo*, 832, 407.

² *Lomi*, 412.

thou art humbled by love. Humiliation is the exaltation of one's foe.¹

"Now, chase away wholly from thy heart the weight of the burden. Every unhappiness is laid upon a man by a subjected one. When will there be complete joy and pleasure in hiding, and why thus should such an endless secrecy afflict us? This is a more trying experience than any that can befall lovers, and in such a state a thousand losses follow one profit, and a year's grief follows a day's joy. Now, O God, I either devote myself to be slain and pass away completely, or I untie the knot that has been hitherto tied, and deliver myself from woe! I know no helper stronger than my sword, nor have I brother better than mine arm!"

"I am not the lover of my self-abandoning Vis and her own, nor am I brave if henceforth I supplicate anyone! Let them announce² my deed, and whatever they desire let that befall! What can befall me worse than death, 435 | or what can strike me sharper than a sword? . . . When I am absent from Vis, I die; when I am near her, my heart is cut as by a sword by not possessing her wholly. A glory-seeker fears no foe and the pearl merchant fears not the sea. The guardian of the road of joy is a lion, and the cup³ of the wine of desire is a sword. Pass by the lion fearlessly and repose secure. When the cold of winter is past, the pleasure of summer comes. Surely God has taken pity on our plight, and the day of our grief is past, and the hour of joy draws near; the severity of winter is gone, and summer approaches."

Ramin during this communing with his heart could no longer stay in one place; he was burning. Sometimes his thoughts made him cold and sometimes hot. He wept and moaned. On the tablets⁴ of his heart was delineated the form of Vis, and his eyes were on the road; he awaited nightfall. He watched the sky for the darkening, that his road might be sooner open to him.

¹ All this soliloquy is somewhat obscure.

² *Gamzhghavndes.* ³ *Dchika*—glass, 390. ⁴ *P'hitzari*, 380.

RAMIN COMES TO MARAV

WHEN from the fire of day the smoke of night remained, and it became dark, there set out the impatient, chestnut-steeded¹ sun Ramin for Khuarasan, and no one saw him save the moon and the stars. None of Moabad's soldiers knew. He himself and Vis's messenger, with forty chosen slaves, sometimes ambling² and sometimes galloping,³ hastened away. In a week they came to Marav down from Gurgan. When they had safely passed through the plain and there was only left one day's journey to Marav, then he sent on Vis's messenger in front, and, according to his love, sent great greetings and longings. And he advised him not to declare the matter at present. He bade the man :

“ Tell no one but Vis and the nurse of my coming and keep this secret, because the nurse alone is our capital⁴ and profit,⁵ and she has brought our plan to such a pass that henceforth it will no longer be hidden. We must not see Moabad's face, and if we do see it, whatever evil befalls me befits me. | To-morrow night be watchful on the castle, expect ⁴³⁷ me at midnight, and seek out some means so that we may be together. Whatever may be necessary afterwards, we will take counsel concerning it, and work out our plan. And until my coming, hide this matter, so that none may know.”

The messenger departed. As is the custom with bringers of good tidings, he came swiftly. At that time Vis was in the old castle of the town of Marav, which is called

¹ *Rakhsosani*, 386, 372—bay.

² *Tsorva*.

³ *Rbeva*.

⁴ *Sat'haqno*, 396.

⁵ *Sargebeli*.

Kuahndez,¹ and all the old and new ancestral² treasure of Moabad lay in that castle. And Zard, the brother of Moabad, was governor of that castle, and also of Vis, who caused him more trouble than the treasure and the castle too. Zard's own treasure lay there too, which was more even than Moabad's. There was no richer man upon the earth than he, for he was Moabad's brother, his trusty eldest of the family,³ and faithful to him.

And he who was sent to Vis entered the city of Marav secretly, and donned a veil⁴ like a woman, and thus went before Vis. Every day there was a reception of women before Vis. No day passed on which dames, wives of grandees, were not invited, and did not rejoice with her and banquet.⁵ That slave sent as a messenger came so veiled that not even Vis knew that he had come in. Then he made himself known and reported Ramin's news in detail, and told her what he had to tell her. How this news pleased Vis and rejoiced her, who can fathom save her own heart? What Ramin had done pleased her, she gave him 438 countless thanks | when she was convinced of his constancy, and she began to seek a means of being with him.

Then Vis immediately sent a man to Zard to say: "My brother Viro has been ill, I have heard and seen in a vision that he is better. Now I wish to perform a religious service,⁶ to spread out a great sacrifice, and to give to the poor." Zard thus replied: "Do so, O God.⁷ Would that thou wert always doing religious and lawful things! Whatever is best, may God make thee to do it."

Immediately Vis went down from the castle and went to pray at the fire altar erected by Djimshed.⁸ She had the daughters and wives of the grandees with her. She gave countless offerings, and they slew many oxen and sheep for the poor; and she spread out for a sacrifice and offering much brocade⁹ and gold. When the night was quite dark,

¹ *Kuahndez.*

² *Papis-papeuli.*

³ *Sakhlsa ukhutzesi*—? major-domo, 450.

⁴ *Zetsari.*

⁵ "enjoy her hospitality." *Maemani*, cf. *moeman* Marr IV., VIII.

13, 1.

⁶ *Samgħt'ho*—divine deed.

⁷ *Għmert'ho.*

⁸ *Djimshed*, 375.

⁹ *Stavra*, 415, 442.

she let Ramin know, and Ramin came secretly. They cleared the place (? of people). In gladness they rejoiced with each other, they took counsel about Ramin's entry. However difficult and trying an affair may be, when God and Fate help a man everything becomes easy. Whatever wives of grandees were there, they all went away one by one.¹ All the outsiders went away. And they (Vis and Ramin) kept their trusty, good slaves. Ramin and Vis dressed the forty men with veils, and Ramin adorned himself in like manner. In front also servants went with candles and torches,² khodjas,³ and officers.⁴ By this means they entered the city so that none noticed them. They beat the men on the road, and kept the servants to take care of Vis.⁵ By this strange⁶ method no one discovered their secret, and they entered the castle with 439 forty good, armed, heroic slaves.

The castellans⁷ locked the castle gate, set sentinels on the walls as usual, and knew not that Moabad's castle was full of his foes. The sentinels began to guard the castle and to shout.⁸ The night became quite dark, like a sad heart. The air was dyed with beads⁹ and pitch.¹⁰ The sky was full of pearls like the bottom¹¹ of the sea. This armed host began to pour forth from the darkness like Alexander's¹² army. Their battle burned the castle like fire. They began to cut up the guards completely. Ramin went against his sleeping brother Zard. Zard was brave and fierce; he leaped up and flew like a panther¹³ at Ramin, as death flew at his (Zard's) fate and ruin¹⁴ upon Moabad.

¹ ? each to her own home.

² *Sint'hlosan-mashkhlosanni*; *mashkhali*.

³ *Khodjani* (?), 12, 47.

⁴ *Chauhni*—? footmen.

⁵ An obscure passage.

⁶ *Uazro*—unthought of, unimagined.

⁷ *Tzikhovani*.

⁸ *Qivili*—? to challenge.

⁹ *Mdzivi*, 299, 389—? jet bead.

¹⁰ *P'hisa*, 95, R., 609.

¹¹ *P'hsceri*.

¹² *Aleksandre*—Alexander of Macedon

¹³ *Vep'hkhi*, 150·

¹⁴ *Tsatsqmeda*.

RAMIN SLAYS ZARD

RAMIN thus spoke with entreaty to Zard :

“ Haste not always to be at enmity with me and to slay me. God knows I desire not that harm should happen to thee from me. Lay down thy sword and let me alone. I am thy younger brother ; do evil to nobody else nor to thyself.”

When Zard heard the voice of Ramin, his eyes were darkened with enmity, he could not hearken, and began to insult Ramin and reproach his ill conduct. He seized his sword to strike. Ramin sheltered himself with his shield¹ ; the shield was cut through. Then Ramin struck Zard, clave his head and arm, and dyed the castle with his blood. On each roof² men lay slain by tens, and in every quarter³ a heap of corpses lay. Many in fear of death leaped down from the castle, but not thus were they saved from death. Many struggled for life, but, nevertheless, they survived not.

441 Even if it had been day, for the | onlookers it would have been night and darker than night. It was not yet cock-crow, and Zard was completely spent. Fate and his planet, however much they had given Ramin his heart’s desire, had not hitherto burned him so much as by the taking away of his brother. However much one may try Fate, it is always thus, that its joy is not without pain.⁴ Its rose is thorny and its joy is troublous ; love is mischance, and its profit is loss.

¹ *Daraia*, 442.

² *Bani*.

³ *Ubani*—district, street, 122. R., 465.

⁴ Joy and grief inseparable, 195, 341. Cf. R., 621, etc.

When Ramin saw his brother slain, his heart was torn and his blood boiled. He tore his collar, beat his head, and began to chant a lament¹: "Woe is me, my blessed brother, beloved as mine own soul! However much thou wert at enmity with me, why did I not calm my heart before thee? Why did I slay thee? . . . Whose arm have I cut, and whose head have I hewed off? How did I slay a brother like thee? Why did I pluck out (mine) eyes with mine own hands? However great joy I may find, and whatever glory awaits me, I can never find a brother like thee!"

Ramin made lament for his brother. He wept, but he had no time to indulge in grief;—it was an hour of trouble and conflict. When the shepherd is slain, the shepherdless sheep are left to the wolf.² The sword of Ramin that night appeared on high like the pictures³ of the Persians⁴ above the pulpit,⁵ for that night was dark like the fate of his foes. The planets and the firmament⁶ evidently desired the sovereignty for Ramin, for the affair succeeded according to his wish.

When day dawned Ramin's fate clearly shone forth, the sun spread upon the earth the story of his accession. In the morning he sat in state⁷ beside Vis, victorious; and because of his being beside Vis he was merry and powerful, 442 grown fearless of all fears and free from care. Before him there was no opponent. He tarried two days indoors, he made arrangements concerning the castles and the troops. Then he collected all the mules,⁸ camels,⁹ and elephants¹⁰ in Marav, and all Moabad's treasure, he loaded the whole on a thousand camels, mules, and elephants, in such a manner that of the treasure not one piece of brocade¹¹ or one *drahcan*¹² was left. He loaded all with gems, pearls,

¹ *Mot'hkma*, 390.

² *Mgeli*, 384.

³ *Khateba*, 205. Cf. *khati*, R., 247.

⁴ *Sparsni*.

⁵ *Mambari* (? Arabic, *mimbar*).

⁶ *P'hilakni*, 349—? Arabic, *falak*—heaven, firmament.

⁷ *Darbazt'ha zeda*.

⁸ *Djori*, R., 22, 447, etc.

⁹ *Aklemi*, 432.

¹⁰ *Pilo*.

¹¹ *Stavra*, 438.

¹² *Drahcani*, 357.

gold, and brocade ; he set out with his friends and soldiers. He put Vis in a litter¹ adorned with gems and pearls. She travelled openly like the moon among the stars. They went swiftly day and night. They made a two weeks' journey in a day. They crossed mountains and plains.

When they reported the news about Ramin to Shah Moabad, Ramin had gone to Qazmin,² and from Qazmin to the country of the Delams. Great and powerful and with many troops are the Delams and the Gelans³—such brave youths,⁴ that they do not miss (the target) on a dark night. They split a hair with a javelin,⁵ and shoot (?) an arrow as big as a mast;⁶ they make the anvil⁷ to run ; they cast a spear⁸ further than a stadium ;⁹ they have huge and good shields.¹⁰ Among themselves they have contests with one another ; they use well the sword, spear, and arrow. They are such brave warriors that however great and brave the monarchs of Persia¹¹ have been, from none of them could they take tribute,¹² nor carry away any of them. Until this day, that land is a virgin, since no monarch whatever has taken her nor found his heart's desire in her.

443 | When Ramin arrived there with his treasures intact, he poured out gold in heaps¹³ and divided it with a pan¹⁴ and began to distribute it. Foe and friend came to him. When gold rained from his hands and Fate bloomed,¹⁵ the army became more numerous than the sand of the sea and the leaves of the trees ; his standard¹⁶ reached to the sky. The army of the whole country came ; but it did not come to him, but to the gold and stuff.¹⁷ All the grandees came to serve him, such as Amiam and Kishar, Viro and Baram, Raham and Gelo. And there were other kings who on

¹ *Cubo*, R., 365, 380.

² *Qazmini*.

³ *Delamni da Gelanelni*, 32.

⁵ *Mazaraci*.

⁴ *Qmani*.

⁷ *Gurdemli*, 333.

⁶ *Navki* (?). An obscure phrase.

⁹ *Utevani*, 341.

⁸ *Shubi*, 332.

¹² *Kharadja*.

¹⁰ *Daraia*, 440.

¹¹ *Sparset'hi*.

¹⁵ *Uquaoda*.

¹³ *Acumi*, 328.

¹⁴ *Djamit'ha*.

¹⁶ *Drosha*, 375.

¹⁷ *Lari*, 199, 446.

account of distance and lack of time could not come then ; all these sent their armies forward, then they themselves came. Ramin's hosts multiplied so that there was not room for them on the earth. Viro was his commander-in-chief and vizier, and the chief of his household and chamberlain were Khami¹ and Gulo.²

When news of this went to Moabad's army, they dared not tell Moabad for fear, because in ill-humour and wrath he went out of himself.³ In kings there is no worse quality than ill-temper.⁴ Everyone preferred to hide that matter. For three days nobody reported it, and all those who belonged to him went away to their own homes. When Moabad learned the news, he became enraged, he lost his wits, he was bound by Fate, and he no longer perceived his road and resource ; so to speak, his road was blocked before and behind. Sometimes he thought : "I will go to Khuarasan, and there shall be neither Vis, nor Ramin, nor Gurgan on the earth when I come back." Sometimes he said : "If I go hence, I shall become a reproach in the earth ; they will mock me, saying : 'He was afraid of Ramin ; | otherwise he 444 would not have gone to Khuarasan.'" Sometimes he said : "Should I go to combat with Ramin, perchance my luck will forsake me. My soldiers are hostile to me. All desire Ramin as king ; he is young, and his fate also is young. I fear the victory will be to him ; he has all my treasure. I am poor, and he rich. I could not eat and use it ; everything I had for him. My mother caused me to forgive Ramin, and it has turned out as might have been expected ; otherwise, why should I have followed Vis's advice ?"

For a whole week he held no court reception,⁵ he was thinking what he should do. His mind wandered over sea and land, then at the end he resolved that he would set out and attack Ramin in battle. He was ashamed to flee, and he set out from Gurgan to Amul, and placed his army on the field of Amul, and he filled the land with his hosts and adorned it with a multitude of tents.⁶

¹ ? Sami.

² ? Gelo.

³ Daubuncbeli—lost his nature.

⁴ Avtnoboba.

⁵ Darbazoba—durbar.

⁶ Caravi

SHAH MOABAD IS SLAIN BY A BOAR

HOWEVER much one has experience of the world, not thus can anyone learn its hidden secret. There is nothing more secret than its heart, nor sharper than its wit. The world is old, and we are like dreams in it. Why should I expect to tarry in it? There is no stability in it. It is not obedient to man, nor distinguishes love from enmity, nor does it fulfil friendship to any who expects love from it. It is even like the thought of the watch-keeping of a blind man. It shows itself to man in various ways: a thing is one thing inside and another outside; it is like a conjurer.¹ Many kinds of figures pass through a gazing crystal,² but inside no one tarries long. It is like an archer who is shooting in a dark night: the arrow flies from the hands

446 [and he does not know where it strikes, and we seek advantage from it and there is none. Even though we have escaped it, yet we are not saved. Thus we are in a dream. When one day is past and a second day comes, the first is forgotten and causes a man to wonder at the other that comes after it. The fickleness of fate magnifies one and humbles another. It has annihilated and ruined on the earth better kings than Moabad (who was) manifested like the sun. At the end he remained sad and with his wishes unfulfilled.

When he made the soldiers camp at Amul, he sat drinking that night until dawn. He completely clad the grandees, he gave the other soldiers arms, a horse, gold

¹ *T'hvalt'h maktzieri*, 389.

² *Mecvebani* (?). The passage is obscure.

and stuff,¹ he filled them with gifts. It was necessary in order to gain their favour. He took pains² about his prestige,³ and did not know what was decreed for him by God's providence after that night. He lay down that night merry and drunken ; then the morn of his misfortune dawned.

Moabad held a durbar, and all the grandees came before him and a council was held. Moabad's tent and the tents of his host were pitched on the edge of a forest.

Suddenly⁴ from the forest there came forth a great boar.⁵ The soldiers saw it and began to pursue it. The pig⁶ began to turn and run about. It went among the tents. Moabad heard the noise of the troops pursuing the pig ; he mounted his dappled⁷ steed, took in his hand javelins⁸ and joined in the pursuit. He aimed javelins at the boar and missed it. Then the pig threw itself upon him, struck the horse, and it stumbled ; Shahinshah fell headlong. He tried to remount | his horse ; again the pig rushed on, 447 struck its tusk⁹ in his breast and ripped him to the navel.¹⁰ The horse and Shahinshah fell, both together.

So great a monarch as Shah Moabad died in this pitiful manner. Shahinshah's days were spent, the candle of Moabad's house was extinguished. Those faithful to him and brought up by him gave themselves up to grief, and the traitors and enemies rejoiced.

O Fate, thou hast no constancy ! For the sake of others I will inquire and prove thy trustworthiness. I will wipe love from my heart. I have no confidence in thy tenderness ! Thou sittest always hidden to war with us ; thou dost not sin against us to our faces. Whatever thou givest thou demandest it all again from us.¹¹ For two days thou art my host, and then demandest my life in return. Why dost thou shed so unmercifully our innocent blood ?

¹ *Lari*, 448.

² *Iurvoda*, 248.

³ *Mordchmuloba*.

⁴ *Anazdeulad*.

⁵ *Takhi*.

⁶ *Ghori*.

⁷ *Dcharmagi*, 29, 145. R., 1831—"white."

⁸ *Satkhedi*.

⁹ *Eshvi*—also wild boar (Ps. lxxx. 18).

¹⁰ *Upe*, 386, 410.

¹¹ Cf. R.

Though openly thou art a light, in concealment thou art very dark. Thou turnest like a mill; thou art full of water, wind, and dust. When thou dost cast my fate into a pit, the height of thee avails me not. However much anyone tries thee, thou art the same and the same, fickle, perjured, treacherous, and faithless. He who knows thy habits continually curses thee.

THE ACCESSION OF RAMIN

WHEN they told Ramin of this death by mischance, and how the dragon¹ had swallowed unexpectedly the sun of the world, he showed much outward grief; he made mourning and lamentations for the dead. But he gave God great thanks in secret, that He had done thus, and had not brought about a war in which the blood of the poor would have been shed. Moabad was dead; Ramin's desire was fulfilled. He did homage to God and sang a song of praise. He said :

“ O God, merciful and goodly to look upon! Surely Thou wert the Creator of heaven and earth, for Thou deliverest man from mischance! Now I lay a vow before Thee, that as long as I live I will not put away Thy commandment. I shall be just, humble, godfearing, true-speaking, a seeker of righteousness, not an oppressor of the poor, merciful, the helper of Thy creatures and slaves; and be Thou merciful to me and guard me, O Lord, deliver me from my foes and those that envy me.”

| He gave alms to the poor, and then immediately he 449 and Vis prepared to set out. They were no longer afraid of Fate and their foes, but were merry. They set out with great hosts, rallying² trumpets³ were sounded; the copper drums⁴ and pennants⁵ stretched like Djeon.⁶ The noise⁷ of the troops in greatness was like the sound which is made in forest-groves⁸ by the wind, even so did it sound in

¹ *Veshapi*.

² *Asaqreli*—camp.

³ *Buci*, 28, 200, 418.

⁴ *Kosi*, 28, 47. R., 703. Marr IV., *rib*.

⁵ *Alami*, 375.

⁶ *Djeon*, 261. ⁷ *Zriali*.

⁸ *Khevnari*.

its exceeding greatness. That road, by the greatness and pomp of the retinue,¹ was like eternity.

From the Mount of Delam to Amul, Ramin came with his beloved, merry and with his desire fulfilled. On a Saturday,² under a happy planet, and with merry heart, he came among the hosts of Moabad, he set up his tents alternately (with those of Moabad's host). The grandees and soldiers of Moabad came and did him homage, they scattered gold, gems and pearls, and congratulated him on his becoming Shahinshah. Every man marvelled at this his good fortune and at his justice according to his vow. His hand was like a cloud in May,³ and from his hand rained gold and silver.

He tarried a week in Amul with the host. Every day he added to his glory, he rejoiced, he gave gifts, he drank, he increased the appanages⁴ of the kings and grandees, and their faithfulness and service increased towards him. Since he was a great and noble man of the race of Rostom, he presented Tabristan to Roham of Basan, and the city of Re he gave to Bego, who was his former friend. When Ramin and Vis were fleeing from Moabad in fear of his oath of fire, then they came to him to the city of Re, and he gave them good entertainment and guarded their secret well.

450 | And in return⁵ for this he gave him the city of Re. Thus a man does not lose by doing good.⁶ He gave Gurgan to Adina and enriched him. He, too, was an old friend, and had suffered in their service. He gave the command of the host⁷ to Viro, and made Shero major-domo.⁸ They were both of noble birth, and both full brothers⁹ of Vis, and for love of Vis they went not away from the court.¹⁰

When these matters had been arranged,¹¹ he gave a province¹² to each of his nobles¹³ and a city to each of his

¹ *Djalabi.*

² *Shabat'hi.*

³ *Maisi*, 86, 320.

⁴ *Sacargavi*, R., 306, 325.

⁵ *Mukap'ha* (Arabic), R., 487, 1167, 1445. Laws of Aghbugha (*rb*).

⁶ *Cf.* 360.

⁷ *Amir-spasalaroba*, 105, 375.

⁸ *Msakhurt'h-ukhutzesoba*—seniority of the servants, 487.

⁹ ? lit., "both bodies were brothers of Vis."

¹⁰ *Cari*—gate.

¹¹ *Daiurva*, 446.

¹² *Kueqana*—country.

¹³ *Aznauri*.

knights.¹ He acquired glory and travelled to Khuarasan, for their royal seat was the city of Marav. The cities and land of Khuarasan were all decked, every person, female and male, gazed upon them. All the roads were like Paradise, every hand scattered gems and pearls at them, and every tongue praised Vis and Ramin. They congratulated them, and the heart of every man gazed on them with the eye of love.

When Shahinshah entered Marav, the city seemed merry like Paradise, and in its charms it was like the fortune and in its loveliness like the face of Vis. A thousand kinds of singing damsels² were seated and sang as many kinds of songs, and all their songs were *shairis*³ in praise⁴ of Ramin. They censed everywhere with aloes⁵ and amber,⁶ they scattered on all sides gold and silver, gems and pearls; under his horse's feet they spread brocade in his honour. For three months the city was thus decked, day and night they ceased not from merrymaking and rejoicing.⁷

| And never was Marav city so adorned, but in truth all 451 the cities of Khuarasan were the same.

The land had suffered much from Moabad, and by his death all were released from woe. They were delivered from the injustice of Moabad, and made to rejoice by the justice of Ramin, just as if they had all been delivered from hell. Evil always befalls the evil-doer, and he remains accursed to eternity. True is the saying of Khuasro⁸: "God created evil people so that hell might not be empty; from that earth out of which He created them, to that again will He bring them in the end."

When Ramin began to do justice in this way, mischance fell asleep in the earth, peace⁹ awoke. From all sides whither he sent his hosts they returned victorious. From

¹ *Qma.*

² *Mutribi*, 881.

³ *Shairi*, 152, 165. R., 19. R.'s metre is that of the *Shairi*.

⁴ *Sakebari*. Cf. *Keba* in R. ⁵ *Alva*, 284. ⁶ *Ambari*, 18, 346.

⁷ *Nishatianoba*, 267. R., 323, 666, 707.

⁸ *Khuasro*, 415, 456.

⁹ *Damshvidoba*.

Chin¹ to Barbar² he held all the earth. He sent to every town grandees and entrusted them to their charge, and he sent and placed in every castle a governor.³ Whatever cities had been laid waste were rebuilt by his order. He built a thousand more towns and villages. But he cut off and slew evil-doers. On all the roads he built inns⁴ for the caravans,⁵ and gave villages for the convenience of travellers, and he emptied the land of ill-doers and scourges⁶ of the road. He gave away so much gold and silver that the name of scarcity was wiped out. He made the whole land forget its former oppression and injustice, and made all joyful. Beggars were enriched, the sheep pastured with the wolves.⁷ On one day every week he held a durbar, he dispensed | justice to the soldiers and officials,⁸ he gave them advice and instructed them. He placed at the doors of the palace men to examine petitioners. At the hour of justice before him king and beggar⁹ were equal, rich and poor. In justice the strong and weak shared equally. Old folk, women and men,¹⁰ were received with honour; learned men, religious men, and divines he honoured and respected alike. Sin became strange to all. He loved wise and prudent men to be near him. Like the sun, he spread (his rays across) the land of Aran.¹¹ All the kings learned from him to do justice.

A hundred and ten years Ramin survived, eighty and three in reigning he and Vis survived. Happy and blest was it for their land. Sometimes they diverted themselves in drinking, in rejoicing, and distributing gifts; sometimes they solaced themselves with learned books and spiritual exercises¹²; sometimes they hunted in Khuarasan, sometimes they stayed in Koistan, sometimes in Darbistan, and some-

¹ *Chini*, 415.

² *Barbary*, 365.

³ *Tzikhis-t'havi*—castellan. Cf. Laws of George V.

⁴ *P'hunduci*, 84, 296, 310. ⁵ *Sakaravno*, 318. ⁶ *Mletseli*.

⁷ Cf. 384. R., 1571. ⁸ *Khhelis-up'hali*, 285. ⁹ *M't'hkhoeli*.

¹⁰ *Diatzi da mamatzzi*. In Georgian, women are nearly always mentioned before men—e.g., “wife and husband,” “mother and father,” “Vis and Ramin.”

¹¹ *Aran*, 125, 236, 240, 412.

¹² *Sasuliero sauravi*.

times in Khuzistan and Baghdad. Wherever he built castles and cities, in every one of them he caused springs to flow. One of the towns built by him is Ahvaza.¹ Then it was called Ramin-Ahvarukmia, and now they call it Avaza. There had not been a sovereign victorious like Ramin, nor one so prudent. He was so merry that he first invented the harp,² as which none has invented from then till now so pleasant a means of rejoicing. And on account of his having first invented it they called it Ramin's harp. Ramin was such in glory that there appeared none disobedient to him.

Vis presented him with two sons, lovely as their mother and father, | and they became wise heroes. One was called 453 Khorshed, and the other Djimshed. They became desired of all monarchs, and faultless in good qualities. The land of Khavar was presented to Khorshed by his parents, and the land of Bzot'har³ to Djimshed. Khuarasan and Khvarazmi⁴ were assigned to one, and they gave to the second the land of Sham,⁵ of Egypt,⁶ and Qiroan.⁷ They kept for themselves Aran, Somkhit'hi,⁸ and the whole of Adrabadagan.

Ramin reigned long in glory, and all his desires and prayers were fulfilled by God. They lived so long that they saw their children's children.

When Vis had been beside Ramin for eighty-one years, she lost her strength through old age; she rejoiced at death, for she had nothing more to desire save this inevitable thing. She became bent like a bow, she withered and became ugly. To one who has no enemy to try him Fate itself suffices as a foe. However much Fate allots to a man, at the last it acts towards him as his enemy could not act. However much a man leans his back on Fate and trusts it, at last it breaks his back with hopelessness. Though Vis had found her heart's desire from Fate, at the end it so befell, and Fate played the dastard,⁹ so that her seven

¹ Ahwaz.

² Changi.

³ Bzot'har (?). Cf. 213.

⁴ Khvarazmi, 4, 6, 26. R., 380, 1543.

⁵ 412. ? Damascus.

⁶ Egiupti, 284.

⁷ 160. ? Kairwan.

⁸ Armenia, 2, 120, 199.

⁹ Idzabuna.

members¹ could no longer obey her orders through weakness. She begged God that she might not outlive Ramin, that Ramin might remain untroubled. After this the waned moon died. Ramin's heart became the abode of 454 grief through her death, | and unceasingly his eyes shed tears. He wept and chanted :

“O beloved friend, more to be desired than life! Thou art gone, thou hast forsaken me completely, and hast left me heart-branded, consumed, weary of the world. . . . None ever had a friend like thee! Now, why art thou become weary of me? Hast thou not oft sworn fidelity to me? Now, because of what sin art thou become merciless? Why hast thou broken thine oath to me? For so long we have been united in soul, affectionate, why hast thou made me to lament? But as I know thy heart, certainly thou didst not deceive me. It is evidently Fate that has betrayed me, and from it this is no marvel. To whom has it fulfilled good from then till now? The earth is emptied of joy by thy departure, thou hast taken everything good with thee. How can I endure the plague of old age² and feebleness, as well as the sadness of being bereft of thee? Or how can I live and endure the thought of this? Grief is added to grief! I lying on a throne and thou in the earth—I cannot think of it!

“Verily, didst thou not say: ‘I will lay down my life for thee?’ Certainly thou hast fulfilled thy word, but without thee my life seems to me worthless. Would that it had been that thou wert weeping at my tomb and grieving for me! I, unhappy one, how can I imagine thy pure body under the earth? How can I place my foot upon the earth—that earth which covers the light of thy face and the beauty of thy body? Sovereignty pleased me for thy sake, through thee I was merry; for thee I desired myself great, it was not for the multitude of treasure and hosts.

455 | “Now, without thee I desire not glory, nor rule, nor treasures, nor hosts. Far from me³ be joy! Now, as long

¹ *Aso.*

² R., 36, 1522.

³ *Haram*—forbidden.

as I live I will heap earth on my head, and sit with torn collar. At this present I do not slay myself wholly, because however long I may exist, I shall be more sorely tried than by death. Nor should an ill deed be done to flee from old age.¹ My heart is full of woes and mine eyes (are full) of blood. . . . Patience is the glory of an old man. In a time of such excessive grief that glory of patience befits him. . . . All griefs are mended by patience, though I no longer expect joy. Sadness for thee oppresses me tightly with a collar, and I cannot bear love. I cannot escape from the thought of thee, and I cannot restrain my hands from thy service; nor by mine eyes without thee do I expect to find joy. As long as I live I shall burn in thoughts of thee. How can I speak thy true praise since I no longer have wit, and my tongue is bound? Not even now can I endure thine absence!"

He lamented² piteously, and wept unceasingly for Vis. He reared a fine sepulchre³ seemly to her with gold and lapis lazuli,⁴ and for himself too. Then he spoke thus as to his following her: "I who am also a corpse mourn this day." Near her, too, he built a fire-worshipping temple,⁵ and its head reached to the clouds, and it was strong—not to be destroyed till eternity. Day and night in there he censed sweet oil and perfumes.

| He called his eldest son, Khorshed, the grandees, and 456 the troops. And he set Khorshed on the royal throne, placed the crown on his head, girt a sword about his loins, blessed him as king, and called his name Khuasrov.⁶ Thus he spoke:

"Eighty and three years have I been a happy monarch. Now have I given thee my belongings and the throne, that ruling may be seemly and befit thee too. God make thee happy. Thou art a young man, and thy fate is young too. Bring not shame upon Vis, thy mother, nor upon me. Do what thou hast seen me do, that I may not judge thee when

¹ Suicide. Cf. R., 728, etc.

² *Most'hkmida*, 890, 441.

³ *Samarkhavi*.

⁴ *Lazhvardi*, R., 984, 1255, 1821.

⁵ *Satzetskhle sakhlis salotzavad*—fire-house for prayer

⁶ *Khuasrov*, 451.

God asks me in that other world. Have a care of divine things, be anxious for justice."

He confided to him his crown, throne, kingdom, troops, and treasures. He came not forth from Vis's sepulchre till the time of his death, nor opened the door, and none saw him.

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PARALLEL PASSAGES TO "RUST'HAVELI."

Parallel passages to *Rust'haveli* will be found on the following pages of the text of *Visramiani* : 50, 53, 102, 109, 138, 134, 142, 145, 151, 165, 185, 194, 205, 219, 225, 245, 264, 306, 320, 330, 360, 387, 390, 397, 450, 454, 455—in all twenty-seven.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

Pp. 35, 111, 197—fate written on forehead (cf. *Arabian Nights*, story of Ala-ed-Din Abu-sh-shamat) : "Upon his forehead is written what God hath decreed to happen unto him."

P. 60—for "and when others come and carry it off he cannot find" read "and when he goes elsewhere he cannot find."

P. 74—for "my mountain-like form has become thin" ? read "my form has become thin (!) as a mountain (? peak)."

P. 91—for "Ramin also asked how that sun was, who had hitherto drunk up his days" read "Ramin also asked how that sun was, and expressed the wish that the days of Ramin might be consumed before hers (i.e. that he might die before her)."

P. 93—for "you who seemed like" read "who seemed to thee like."

P. 102, note 1—for "965" read "945."

Pp. 152, 257—Greek and Turkish female slaves—cf. "Taj-el-Muluk" in *Arabian Nights*.

P. 232—the green-clad angel is evidently St. George (El-Khidr). Cf. the "person clad in green garments" in the *Arabian Nights* (story of Mohammad the Lazy).

Pp. 252, 378—cf. the *Arabian Nights* (story of Ala-ed-Din Abu-sh-shamat) : "The nights are pregnant with events."

Pp. 260, 343, 344, 387—Zangi, Ethiop.—Arabic Zunuj or Zanj, Zanzibaris.

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